FILLING IN THE GAPS FOR OLD SCHOOL GAMERS

49 Creature Feature
Ecology of the Gree-Kin

71 Domiciles & Emporia
The Home of Walter

86 Mini-Adventure
Hex Crawls

Fall
2013
Issue 6

Wilderness Adventures

Would Someone Please Mow My Grasslands?
grass to fear

Mounts of the Elven Courts
not your typical horses

Australian Monsters
creatures from the land down under

Stat This Monster
your guess is as good as mine!

BONUS ARTICLE

Cure Stones
new magic items from Lenard Lakofka*!*

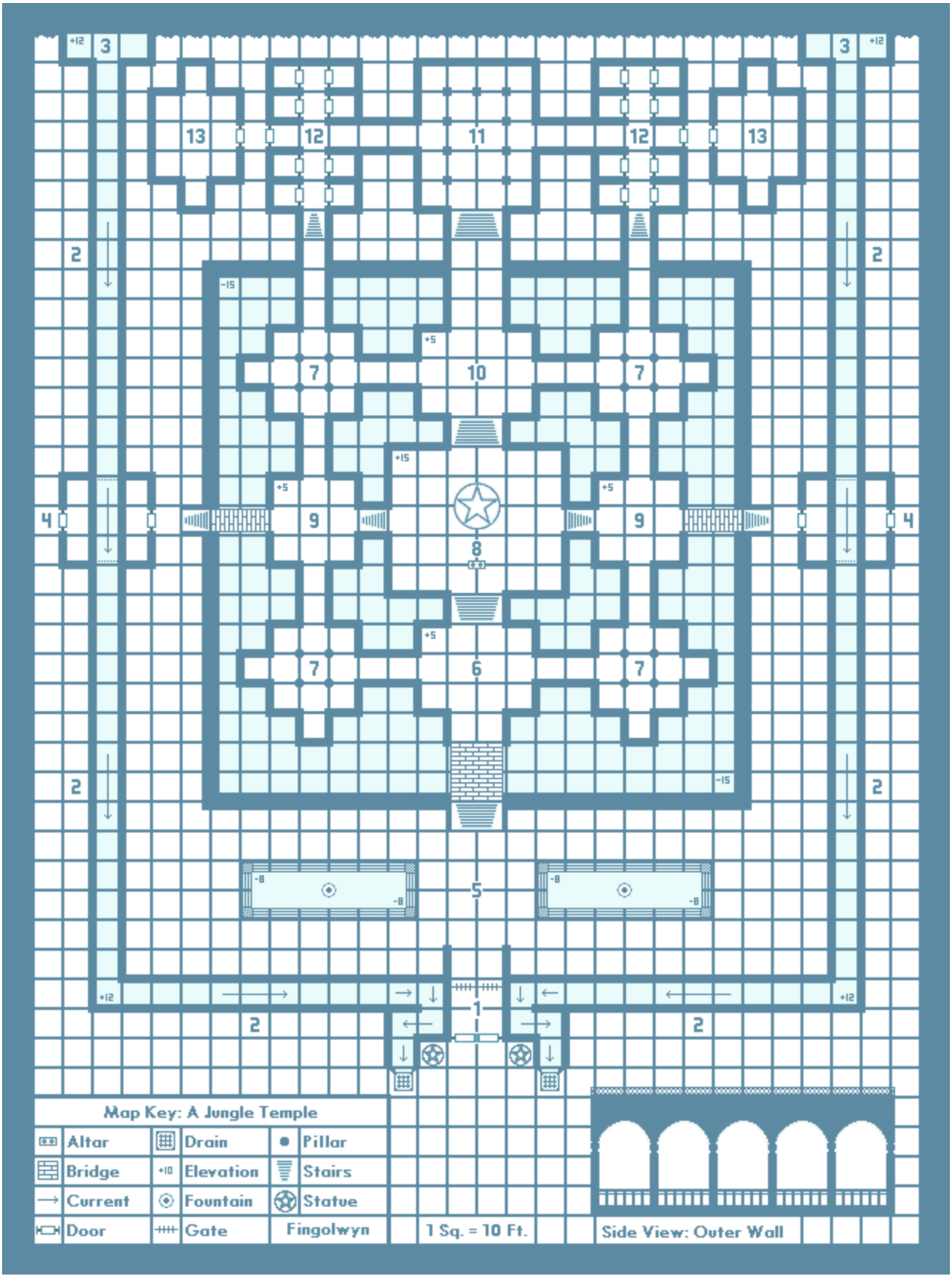
The Band of Three
dangerous friends to have

Interview with Bill Barsh, Pacesetter Games
opinions on the OSR

And-Mag.com

Map 1

Map by M.W. Poort AKA Fingolwyn



The Staff

Publisher:	Nicole Massey
Chief Editor/Layout::	Bryan Fazekas
Senior Editor:	Andrew Hamilton
Editors:	Dan Rasaiah Ian Slater
Art Director:	Ralph Glatt
Cartographer:	Andreas Claren
Logo Design:	Payton Gauldin

The Contributors

Cover Art:	John Fredericks
Interior Art:	John Fredericks Caleb Horowitz Milo Del Teigeler
Maps:	M.W. Poort (Fingolwyn)
Contributing Authors:	Lee Conner Michael Corrinet Lenard Lakofka

& Magazine is published four times a year by the *& Publishing Group*. It is available for download at http://www.and-mag.com/downloads.html.

The rights to all material published herein belongs to the author(s) of the said work. Each has granted **& Magazine** the rights to publish the materials in this issue and any subsequent reprints or compilations.

Articles may be submitted by email to submissions@and-mag.com. Please review the **&** submission guidelines prior to submitting any materials.

Dungeons & Dragons™, Advanced Dungeons and Dragons™, D&D™ and *AD&D™* are owned by Wizards of the Coast and their use here is not intended as a challenge to their ownership of that copyright. All materials are used here without permission. All other material is copyrighted to the listed author or artist, and used by permission.

Nothing in this publication constitutes official rules additions or changes to the AD&D game. Use is at the discretion of the game master and the players of individual games.

The theme of this quarter's magazine is

Wilderness Adventuring

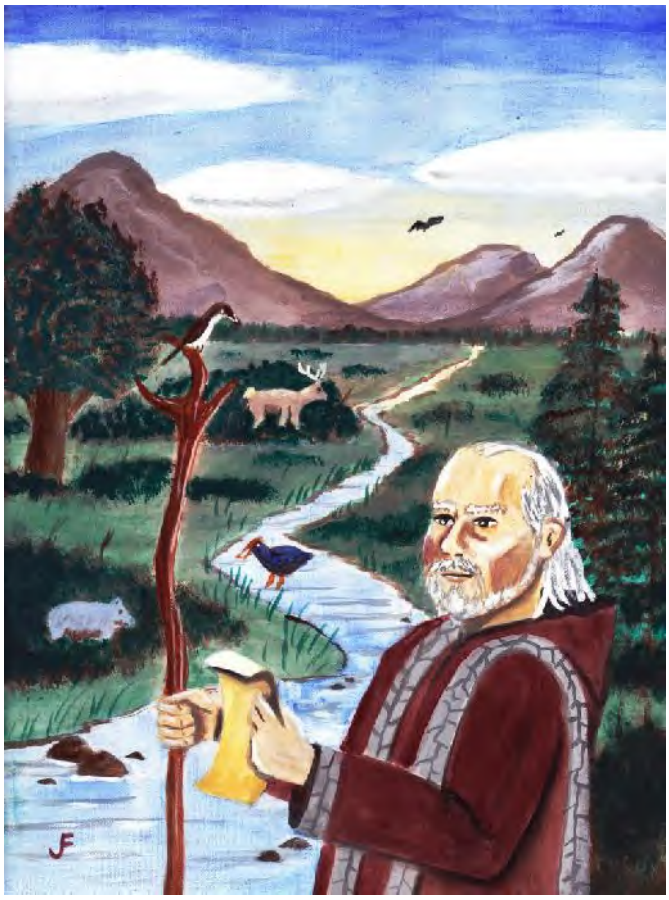
Contents

Map 1, Jungle Temple, by Fingolwyn 2
Featured Artist 5
Tread Softly, by Nicole Massey 6
& Magazine on the Net 8
The Commute to Lake Geneva and Sand Tables, by Lenard Lakofka 9
Who Plays an Adventure as Written?, by Dan Rasaiah 11
Mounts of the Elven Courts, by Andrew Hamilton 13
Would Someone Please Mow My Grasslands?, by Michael Corrinet 18
Game & Herd Animals of the Lakelands, by Andrew Hamilton 22
Trees and Shrubs of the Lakelands, by Andrew Hamilton 28
Stat This Monster 35
Interview with Bill Barsh, Pacesetter Games, by Andrew Hamilton 36
Creature Feature I: Australian Monsters, by Dan Rasaiah 42
Creature Feature II: Ecology of the Gree-Kin, by Bryan Fazekas 49
Creature Feature III: Jellies, by Dan Rasaiah 56
Friend or Foe: The Band of Three, by Bryan Fazekas 58
The Toybox I: New Weapons III – India and the Stars, by Nicole Massey 62
The Toybox II: Druidic Magic Items, by Dan Rasaiah 65
The Toybox III: Cure Stones, by Lenard Lakofka 68
Spellcaster's Paradise I: Kara's Telepad, by Nicole Massey 70
Spellcaster's Paradise II: Wilderness Spells, by Lee Conner, Andrew Hamilton, and Nicole Massey 72
Emporia & Domiciles: The Home of Walter, He who Dances, by Nicole Massey 81
One Page Dungeon: Giant Porcupine Rescue Mission, by Andrew Hamilton 84
Hex Crawls, by Andrew Hamilton 86
For Further Reading 94
Map 2, County Villa, by Fingolwyn 95

Featured Artist

This month's cover artist is John Fredericks, a chemistry and physics teacher from Pennsylvania. Owlbears loom largely in his lecture examples. John has been playing D&D since the dawn of Norwegian pop sensation A-Ha, and fondly remembers a two-year run of *FASA Star Trek*. Presently he DM's an online old-school D&D game with a great group, and attends local conventions.

You can see his online comics at http://teaman.thecomicseries.com and his artwork at: http://teamanrpg.weebly.com



Magic Items

Scattered throughout **&** are new magic items!

Bryan Fazekas
Quiver of Thambarskelfir 71

Ian Slater
Blade of the Steed 12
Smoke Blade 41
Sword of Reverberation 48
Sword of Eloquence 48

Interior Art

Since our first issue, & Magazine has featured amateur artists and given them a place to strut their stuff. This issue's artists are:

John Fredericks
Telepad 70

Caleb Horowitz
Ram 23
Elk 24
Moose 25
Giant Wombat 42
Rat Worm 47
Giant Box Jellyfish 56
Giant Porcupine 85

Milo
Giant Fight 7
Odd Sword 21
Pole Arm 62
Thief Sword 64
Green Staff 66
Thug Head 67

Del Teigeler
Rampaging Bull 3
Landscape 13
Marsupial Lion 43
Dungeon Jelly 57
Druid's Face 81

Ian Slater (continued)
Salamander Sword 55
Sword of the Waghalter 57
Sword of Suspension 57
Sword of the Sparrow 61
Rogues Blade 64
Shadow Blade 67
Spark Sword 67
Sword of Retribution 69
Sword of Stealth 85

Tread Softly

by Nicole Massey

Thoughts from the publisher

It took us a while to get here, but here we are. I always wanted to do a wilderness issue – this is one of my favorite aspects of the game. But I wanted to take some time to get to it, so we had our feet under us, and so we could do it justice. I doubt this will be our only wilderness issue, as there's a lot of things we can do in the wilds.

Some of you may have noticed some changes in our masthead. Since my role is mostly strategic I've taken the title of Publisher, which gave us room for Bryan to take the Editor in Chief spot, which better reflects what he's doing with layout and actually assembling the magazine. And Andrew, who has been vital since day one of this project, is now listed as our senior editor to better reflect what he's doing. There's still a lot of room here for other folks who want to join in, and not all roles are creative. All projects need innovators and administrators, and even if you don't have any ideas there are things we need help with, like finding artwork, spreading the word, editing, maintaining the website, and a long list of other things.

So, how about this issue? Well, as you might expect, we have a lot of wilderness stuff. (I know you're shocked at this…) Michael Coronet, a new contributor, has an article for us on some interesting (and potentially deadly) types of grass. Andrew Hamilton once again gives us much to work with as he writes about elvish horses, and both herd animals and trees in his Lakelands campaign setting. He also gives us a one page dungeon involving the rescue of a giant porcupine. Dan Rasaiah gives us several creatures, this time hailing from down under, and also provides us with an editorial continuing the thread from Andrew Hamilton's editorial last issue on the dynamics of the OSR. Bryan Fazekas also gives us one of his ecology articles, this time about the Gree-kin, while I provide another home and some more weapons. We also have a selection of spells from different sources, and some other interesting creatures and life forms.

It's been a fast and intense year and a half. This time last year we were putting out our Undead issue, with the Valley of Eternal Rest, our first pull-out module, in it. Now we stand at the threshold of where so many magazines of our type fail. What do I mean? I've gotten the chance to survey a lot of magazines, especially fan creations, and a lot of them fail either at the fourth issue or around the seventh issue. I can assure you we're not going anywhere, as we've got a process and procedure that seems to work. So keep the ideas coming our way, as we're still going strong.

We need your help, though. When a writer contacts me and asks what the benefit is for them to submit an article to a non-paying market like us, I tell them that it's of great benefit to them. Besides getting their ideas out there and contributing to the OSR community by sparking discussion and creating more ideas based off theirs, we are a publication, and as such we look good on a resume as a writing credit. But more importantly we provide a new writer with some contact with the editing and publication process, which paying editors appreciate. And here's where you folks who read our magazine come in – we provide a forum for feedback to the writer as to how their writings are viewed and included. But for that to happen we need your feedback about what you did and didn't like, along with any comments about any flaws or

We welcome your creatures, spells, items, adventure seeds, and other submissions! Send them to:

submissions@and-mag.com.

We reserve the right to copy edit submissions for length, grammar, and content.

different approaches you might have found in our virtual pages.

We also get questions about what kind of stuff we're looking for. Okay, here's what we're looking for – quality. As I said in my first editorial, I'm not going to reject something just because I disagree with it. I'll reject it for one of three reasons – it doesn't follow our guidelines, (so read the writers guidelines, folks), it doesn't fit in a particular issue, or it doesn't meet our quality standards. This means that if you write a good article on a feat system for AD&D first edition and we can find a good place for it in an issue and it meets all of our guidelines then I'll fit it in somewhere. And if someone writes a good article or editorial on how the system doesn't need feats or skills I'll find a place for that too – my opinions about the game aren't driving editorial content here. Ditto for an article on how there should not be multi-classes and sub-classes. But if someone submits a poorly written article on the first edition combat system I'm not going to publish it, because it doesn't meet the quality standards. We survive because people want to read what we put out, and I won't lower the quality just to fill pages – I want to fill pages with things that meet our standards and provide value for the readers. The only other criterion is that we ask writers to work from a 'By the Book' starting point – it's pretty much assumed that there's a lot of house rules out there, and that's fine, but to serve the maximum number of folks we need to start from the same starting point. After all, this was one of the reasons AD&D was first developed – to provide consistent rules for everyone across the board.

We Welcome Your Letters!

Send your letters to:
letters@and-mag.com

Some letters received will be published in our letters column each issue. We regret that we cannot print or answer all letters.

We reserve the right to copyedit any published letters for length or content.

Not that I could ever dream that everything we do will be of equal value to all readers – our particular branch of the hobby has a lot of variance, and I can't dream that we'll always please everyone with every article or submission. And if we don't publish something you want to see, at least tell us what you think we're missing. (And if you get inspired to write an article, that's more the better.) We have to know what people want to see before we can start filling that need, as it's your game too, not just ours. So let us know what you'd want in the magazine, but also understand that we cater to folks who have been playing the game since the books came flying off the presses in Lake Geneva and also those who just took their parents' books off the shelf and said "What's this?" Or folks who just bought them from a used books store, eBay, or the new premium releases Wizards of the Coast just released last year.

Remember too that we accept submissions of shorter length – Got a spell, magic item, mundane item, or even a haiku you want to see in the magazine? Have a map you want to see in our end pages? We always need these kinds of small things, as well as the articles, fiction, and artwork.

So yes, we want to hear from you. Tell us what you like. Tell us what you didn't find so interesting or engaging. You can send a message to our letters address (letters@and-mag.com) or post to one of the forum systems on the web where we have a presence (see **& Magazine on the Net**, next page). We'd love to hear from you about the magazine and what kinds of themes and articles you'd like to see.

& Magazine on the Net

The staff of the *& Publishing Group* has been busy as usual. Since our inaugural issue over one year ago, we have published six issues (including this one) plus two adventures and two supplements (including the Issue 5 supplement *Mundane Magica*). In between our editing and writing duties, we frequent a number of forums and have done two shows on the *Roll for Initiative* podcast!

In March the folks at **OSRGaming** –the people who run the *Roll for Initiative*, *Save or Die*, and *THAC0's Hammer* podcasts – graciously established a forum for us on their site!

http://osrgaming.org/forums/viewforum.php?f=110

Since forming the *& Publishing Group* we have been active in a number of venues on the net, including:

FirstEditonDND Yahoo Group

http://games.groups.yahoo.com/group/FirstEditonDND/

Dragonsfoot

http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=11&t=56145

http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=11&t=26003&p=1333624#p1333624

Pen & Paper Games

http://www.penandpapergames.com/forums/showthread.php/23274-New-old-school-D-amp-D-magazine-free?p=181105

RPG.NET

http://forum.rpg.net/showthread.php?638167-New-old-school-D-amp-D-mag-f

USENET

rec.games.frp.dnd alt.games.adndfe rec.games.frp.misc

We will continue to be active in all our old haunts! There's no need to join another forum to get & news, although we are *very* pleased to have our own forum!

The Commute to Lake Geneva and Sand Tables

by Lenard Lakofka

Musings on war gaming, Gen Con I, sand tables, and movies

Commuting ...

Gary Gygax worked in Chicago and commuted to Lake Geneva by train five days a week. Occasionally I would have lunch with him at the cafeteria in the building where he was an insurance agent. We would chat about the IFW (*International Federation of Wargaming* – one thinks it should have been Wargamers but it was what it was.), *Avalon Hill Games* (Battle of the Bulge was the newest game in the line) and a bit of the history of war. Fun chats and always informative.

I came to wargaming from playing games of skill, as opposed the board games of chance that depend so much on luck and not very much on skill. I purchased the *Avalon Hill* game called *Gettysburg* at a Chicago bookstore. It was a square board (before the days of hexagons) and the rules governing the map and movement were, to say the least, unusual. Moving diagonally was a great thing if you could do it since you accomplished a longer move as opposed to moving horizontally or vertically.

After doing this for a few months a group from Chicago travelled to Lake Geneva for Gen Con One. It was a Saturday only event attended by ninety nine people at the Horticulture Hall. There were board games and miniatures and some other events. Gary and I spent time making hot dogs and vending soda in the kitchen. We made some extra money on food filing this fact away for future conventions. We were sure that there would be more conventions after the success of this one. We actually made about $200!!

The next day, Sunday, after the cleanup, Gary suggested we play a miniatures game of medieval knights using a set of rules he had devised. (A few years later they would become "Chainmail".) Being a novice at miniatures I charged with my six horse unit into a barrage of arrow fire that slaughtered all but one of them as I went across the field. (Note to self: don't do that again)

Now here is where the time line blurs a bit. Gary hosted Gen Con II and perhaps III. I did the following one and Bill Hoyer the next. Then we moved the venue. During this time frame Gary left his job in Chicago. A few of us had made the pilgrimage to Lake Geneva to play on Gary's basement sand table. It was 4 x 8 I guess but maybe 5 x 9. Gary had a vast collection of Elastolin * figures from a number of eras. We would play using those miniatures and his Chainmail rules. We also were doing WWII miniatures using tanks and infantry. Those were Mike Reese's rules.

One Saturday we drove up, and while we are talking about the IFW upstairs, Mark Nyderek was terraforming the sand table in the basement. Planting trees, putting in a river, making a road and hiding his troops in strategic places. It was lovely and took him around three hours. The only minor problem was that that was the day that workmen came (two days early) to deliver the machines that Gary would use to take up his new profession of cobbler. Few knew he was polishing and fixing shoes for a few years, but yes that happened. Poor Mark had to demolish his beautiful design so that the machines could be brought in. The sound of a large bubble bursting would be good right here.

Some time passes and Gary gets *Chainmail* published by Don Lowry; a small booklet with a nasty shade of yellow cover. The back of this tiny tome contained a Fantasy Supplement, replete with Heroes, Super Heroes, Wizards, Orcs, Trolls, and

* **Elastolin** is a trademark used by the German company O&M Hausser (O&M Haußer) for the toy soldiers and other types of figures it manufactured from composite material and later from plastic.

sundry others. *Chainmail* worked quite well for fantasy miniatures by the way. Everything was measured in inches; remember that fact – it will come up later.

Well, we all wanted to play the fantasy miniature rules. I as a Wizard, later to be named Leomund The Blue Esquire. He was allowed to select two spells from the list; Fire Ball, Lightning Bolt, Summon Elemental, and Teleport. (I think that is the right set of four spells.) I picked Teleport and Fire Ball. My sub-commander had a troop of men at arms. He ran in to attack a lone figure in full armor. I cast my Fire Ball at the same time! (Medieval; no walkie-talkies, and no clairvoyance/clairaudience spells – yet.) My Fire Ball arrives just as Mark's men at arms do. I wipe out Mark's men at arms to the last man and the Super Hero makes his saving throw and survives! (note to self: don't do that again.)

It should go without saying that the Fantasy supplement became *Dungeons and Dragons*. *D&D* measured everything in inches because it evolved from *Chainmail*. See that did come from someplace that was mostly logical.

My Sand Table

I had never built a sand table before. For that matter, my carpentry skills came from my uncle and dad, doing home repairs and a semester of wood shop at Lane Tech High School. But I learned the value of a saw horse. I had none so I began by building two of them out of 2x4s. I built them tall, 40 inches, because the 4x8 thick base board goes on top and is screwed to the saw horses. Instead of four legs I chose this method. Then I put 1x6 boards around as a frame. Painting with glossy outdoor paint, four coats of a fairly dark blue for the bottom and tan for the frame. Then bag after bag of sand that would be wetted a bit to form the features.

Twelve bags as I recall. Then it had a 5x9 cover. It was outside under the shade of an overhanging roof. This all took 16 hours or so of real time. All of that was required before the first road, hill, bush, and tree. This added to my frustration after the first terraforming.

When I moved to a rented house in Long Beach almost 15 to 20 years later, I built a sand table on the back patio. I designed a scenario to be played out in miniatures on the table using the Party and their Henchmen. There were four player characters. It was a beautiful table that took me three hours to terraform it (I know you just read this a few paragraphs ago, but this is a different story I promise.)

My players marched out to see the sand table, admire it, and then the ex-Marine in the group promptly announced that they would GO AROUND this section of road! I asked why did you decide this? They said it looks an area for a trap or ambush. So I said did you like the table? They all nodded. I said I'm off to see a movie there won't be a game today. They said wait, we have free will, we can choose to go here or not. I said I have free will too and you can choose to go home, or come to the movie with me. And I'm not buying your tickets either.

Illustrating the principle that while the party does have free will, the DM works long and hard to plan adventures. When the party says we'll turn here and go north and screw what you've designed, it is up to the DM to screw them right back.

An unpleasant little turn of events which was never repeated. After that I designed and they played; and we were all happier!

Bittersweet Escape

Walking from the cave mouth, Jimwise sighed.

Finally out of there.

He reflected on his fallen friends still in there, never to rise again. Finerra the warrior, Kelvas the wizard, and pious Mother Allandra would adventure no more. All fallen from the onslaught of orcs, goblins, kobolds, and a lone troll.

He had a long way to go before he could rest. And then, rested, he would honor his fallen friends. And possibly return for revenge.

As he walked, his feet heavy, he sighed. "Farewell, my friends. I will remember all of you as long as I live and breathe."

Who Plays an Adventure as Written?

by Dan Rasaiah

Is the written word more important than the game?

Warning: *This article features spoilers from:* The Temple of Elemental Evil, The Keep on the Borderlands, The Horror on the Hill, *and Alphonso Warden's adventures* The People of the Pit *and* The Forgotten Temple of Baalzebul.

There has never been a better time to be an old school gamer. Whether it's the abundance of new OSR material available, the plethora of free online resources, or the ready availability of 'hard to find' arcana via Ebay, this is the true golden era of Dungeons and Dragons and it's many derivatives.

Growing up in Australia during the advent of D&D meant you took what you could get. There was a distinct rarity of available products, and they were exorbitantly priced compared to the USA. *The Forest Oracle* selling at four times markup? That's like striking gold where I come from. *Castle Greyhawk* on sale for $50? Get me two copies in case one gets damaged.

Now thankfully, it's a different story. Rather than settling for the low points of TSR's generous output, the global D&D community can access the best products at cheap (or sometimes free) prices.

So confronted with such diversity of choice, how does one narrow the field and incorporate OSR material into the campaign?

My solution is to find a module with a theme or setting which fits the campaign vision, and then basically ignore the filler if need be.

I've never been one to play an adventure entirely as written, in fact what makes classic adventures such as B2 *The Keep on the Borderlands* and D3 *The Vault of the Drow* so appealing, is their ability to be modified to suit the DM's campaign. They provide a backdrop, with a certain ambience, (particularly in the case of D3), which allows an imaginative DM to tweak and insert his own creations to truly embellish a fantasy world.

This is certainly the case with Alphonso Warden's module *The People of the Pit*. The eponymous A. Merritt short story written in 1918 conjured a sinister Lovecraftian vibe, which echoes pronouncedly in the module, and immediately, a capable DM can see Erelhei Cinlu; for slugs.

The critics of this module cite the many lethal traps and almost impossible set encounters as reason to pass it over, but I would beg to differ. Sure opening a door and stepping into a Sphere of Annihilation isn't my idea of a good time (ahem, room 2 in the high temple). Nor is entering the city and becoming immediately charmed, shackled and subsequently tentacle-whipped to death by spectral slugs (a distinct outcome if the PC's enter at night). Nonetheless, despite the authors penchant for save or die traps at every turn, and TPK style encounters, the sheer ambience and horror factor of the module make it a winner in my book.

As I tend to run campaigns rather than one-shots, I have no interest in wiping out several years of gaming experience in one unnecessary 'save or die' trap; so it's an easy fix to remove most of these. Similarly it's an easy fix to scale back difficult encounters or remove them completely. It's the setting I want, and this module provides it in spades. I've had similar issues in the past with the Shrine of Chaos from B2. Twenty zombies, twenty skeletons, evil priests with zombie bodyguards … this encounter has wiped out several of my gaming groups. Likewise the Earth temple and numerous other encounters in *The Temple of Elemental Evil* … (moathouse anyone?).

Despite the lethality of many old-school modules, (the red dragon in *The Horror on the Hill comes to mind*), they are still beloved and played by DM's even today. So I think it's fair to say that its rare (outside of the one-shot beer and pretzels nights) for most DM's to play adventures as written. If there are interesting NPC's, great backstory, or even just

decent maps, then there's gold to be found in them thar hills.

The inverse of this problem, modules being too easy for the stated difficulty, has also never been a major issue for me. If the maps, writing, and general ambience of the module is suitable, then it's a simple matter for even moderately experienced DM's to pad monster numbers or substitute them entirely. I cite Alphonso Warden's module *The Forgotten temple of Baalzebul* as an example. Like many other modules, this one often falls into the trap on trying to challenge PC's with one big bad guy rather than a group of complimentary foes.

An example of this is the second guardian from room 62. This solitary foe (a cambion cleric) is recommended by the author to lead off with **Cause Blindness** as a tactic (1 round casting time). Later on it's recommended that the spell **Cause Disease** be used (1 turn casting time). Even if these spells get off (which they won't), they're going to be laughed off by any self-respecting party of 13-15th levels (the module's recommended difficulty). These tactical omissions repeat throughout the module, which makes me infer that Mr. Warden is more a game designer rather than a player. Nonetheless, this is still a terrific module in my opinion, and by reworking the traps and set encounters, I've got a blistering adventure waiting to go.

So unless you're brand new to the game, or looking for a challenge or laugh with a bunch of pre-generated characters, it's most likely a rare thing that you'll run an adventure precisely as written. With the variety of home-rules and power levels between gaming groups however, it would be impossible for authors to please everybody. So my two cents are, take the good with the bad, and expect modules to require modification to be relevant to your gaming group.

Fanzine and Magazine Publishers and Collectors!

& is compiling an index of articles relating to our hobby published in professional, semi-professional, and fan created magazines, and we would love to have your assistance in this process.

Have you built an index of your favorite magazine, or are you considering it? Send us your indices of articles in a DragonDex oriented format and we will add them to our growing index for D&D articles and other related material.

The **&** staff is working on White Dwarf and Footprints – we welcome your help in building a resource for fellow gamers.

Make sure you include your name and email address so we can ensure you get credit for your work! See our Index page for more details and formatting guidelines.

Stay tuned for details of how we will publish our indices!

Blade of the Steed

This blade is a +1 magical weapon. Once per day the wielder may locate all animals of sufficient size to serve as mounts in a 1 mile radius and if one of these is approached within 1 hour of identification the wielder can cast an **Animal Friendship** spell upon it as a 12th level caster, and may persuade it to act as a steed for up to 24 hours. Some of these swords (25%) identify monsters that can serve as steeds, and have a **Charm Monster** power also cast at 12th level.

Note that the wielder need not locate the potential steed using the sword, if the thief is fleeing pursuit in a busy city and views a tethered horse he could cast the spell upon that horse as he approached. Also note that 1% of these swords are cursed and will cause the animal/monster to attack the wielder.

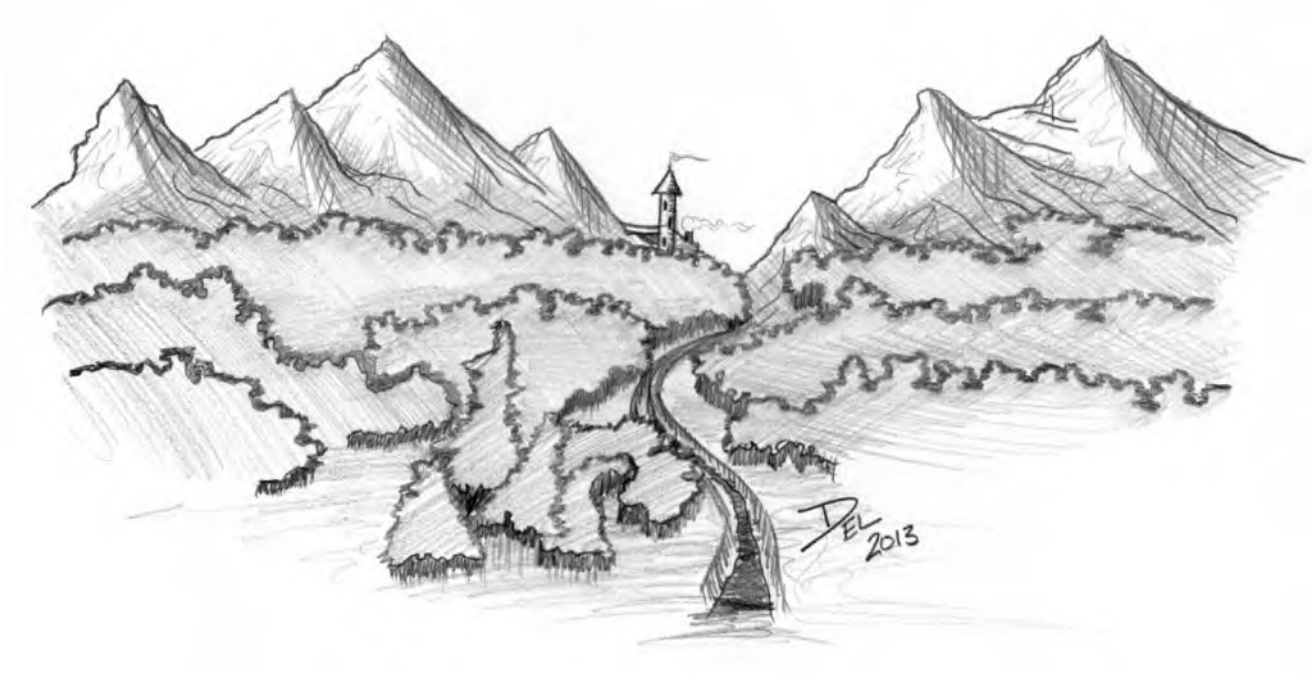
Sword type (1d8): 1-3 short, 4-6 broad, 7-8 long.

GP value 7,000; XP value 1,500 *by Ian Slater*

Mounts of the Elven Courts

by Andrew Hamilton

Details from the author's campaign setting, The Lakelands, on the mounts used by elves



Background

It is not just humans who take pride in their horses, and spend generations seeking to breed the perfect horse. The elves of the Elven Courts prize swift, agile and intelligent horses; and they have lifespans to support centuries long breeding programs, finding the fastest and smartest horses. Elves also have the magical capability and the faerie relationships to introduce unicorn or pegasi blood (or at least their traits) into their horses' bloodlines. The result is a horse with capabilities beyond the norm, not unlike the elven dogs and elven cats which are also prized companions in the Elven Court.

Elves view their horses as companions, not as tools or pets. The native intelligence of the elven horses certainly facilitates the development of this bond, as the elven horses are intelligent enough (semi-intelligent, equivalent to an Intelligence of 2 to 4) to understand rudimentary human speech (they'll understand simple but not advanced concepts), and they can display behaviors that clearly communicate affection and loyalty. This intelligence also means that elven horses can be trained very quickly, learning to work with their rider. An elven horseman and his elven horse become so closely bonded that they almost seem to be a single entity, able to easily perform tricks and feats that the most seasoned human horsemen (including rangers and cavaliers) would hesitate to attempt.

NOTE: In game terms this is equivalent to a +3 bonus to any Land Based Riding and a +4 bonus to any Animal Training Non-Weapon Proficiency checks. In a campaign that does not utilize NWPs, this should equate to a +3 bonus to any appropriate attribute checks that the DM may require for a trick or training check.

The companionship goes farther than the relationship between a rider and a single horse. While an elven horse's life (most live about 40 to 45 years, although they are strong and fit enough to bear riders for only 35 of those years) is fleeting compared to that of their rider, the elven horsemen take great interest and pride in the lineage of their mounts, and many seek to associate with a "family" or "line" of horses. The journals and histories of many an elven warrior or elven clan contain reams of information about their companion horses, their lineage, the matings and the offspring, and the

heroic deeds accomplished by the horses and elven riders.

Elves guard their horses jealously, because they are companions and not simple livestock. Offers of purchase will be rejected outright, often in a scornful manner. If horse thieves make off with elven horses, one can be assured that elite bands of elven adventurers will pursue the thieves to rescue their companions. It is also unlikely that the captive elven horses will be co-operative, and they will seek opportunities to bolt and escape. In very rare cases, elves have gifted human allies with a single elven horse (never two). Unfortunately for those humans that have been gifted with an elven horse, a pairing between an elven horse and a normal horse produces a normal horse (although it will be a horse of good health & speed).

Elven Cavalry

While bards tell many tales of elven maidens mounted upon unicorns, the truth is that most elven cavalry consists of elven warriors mounted on swift, unarmoured horses. Elven horsemen prefer to avoid the brutal clashes favored by human heavy cavalry, and instead prefer to make sweeping ride-by attacks, or strike from a distance, armed with composite short bows (an exception to the elven love of the longbow). In most elven communities cavalry is rarely found in large numbers either; the most common grouping is a dozen to a score of skilled riders and warriors, wielding a mixed bag of weapons and magic. These forces act as scouts, skirmishers, and rear-guards.

Tack & Harness

Not surprisingly given their love of beautiful, well-crafted items, the saddle and harness that elves use with their mounts is well made, and beautifully decorated. While most of the tack & harness is the same as that used by humans (including stirrups, although some elves choose to ride bareback) elves do not use a bit, instead having a soft muzzle like nose-piece for the horse that does not hinder the horses breathing, chewing or drinking, and does not cause the mount any discomfort. Elves scoff at the use of a bit, having a strong enough connection with their intelligent mounts that they do not need such a cruel device to "control" their mounts.

Elven tack & harness is carefully crafted or altered to ensure the perfect fit for the horse that will use it. Elves care greatly for the comfort of their horses, and would never use a rough saddle cinch or saddle blanket. They also take great care in grooming their companions, and spoil them with treats such as apples and honey candies.

Many elven legends and tales speak of powerful magical items crafted by elven fighter/magic-users for their horses; other tales tell of a elven arch-magi that crafted a powerful magical item for their lover's mount, a gift to aid both lover and their animal companion. Some of these items are common magical items, like horseshoes of a zephyr, or variations of mundane magical items (such as bags of holding crafted as saddlebags). Other magical items included in tales are saddles that need no cinch, or saddles that provide the horse with protection (a +1 saddle of protection, like a ring of protection); saddle blankets that acted to lighten the load borne by the steed; tokens affixed to the reins that protect against evil, fire, or cold; cords or charms woven into manes of tails that allow the steed to see in the darkest of nights; and even more wondrous magical items. One story of the elven sword-maiden Feylirra Gil'Erlethe, The Maiden of Weeping River, tells of a covenant struck between her and a hierophant druid that led to the creation and gifting of magical barding crafted from oak leaves. This barding withstood the mightiest blows, and was instrumental in allowing Feylirra to stand against and drive off Ner-yik-lor, the gnoll warlord intent on burning the Elven Courts to ash.

The Breeds

There are several breeds of elven horses. Some of the rarer breeds (not described here) include the Greentail (a horse bred to blend in with the forest background, soft of hoof and quite stealthy), the Frothback (a strong swimmer, able to swim against the fiercest currents and even submerge itself under

water), and the Frostmane (bred by the elves the Northern Reaches, clans whose Elven Homes are at the edge of the tree line, this breed is resistant to normal cold, able to walk on snow and ice with sure footing). However, the two most common breeds of elven horse are the Graceful and the Wind-dancer, which are described below.

Graceful (Unicorn blood)

Frequency:	Very Rare (almost never found outside the Elven Courts)
No. Appearing:	1
Armor Class:	7
Movement:	26" + 1d4"
Hit Dice:	3+1
% in Lair:	nil
Treasure Type:	nil
No. of Attacks:	2 (kicks)
Damage:	1d6/1d6
Special Attacks:	none
Special Defences:	sprint
Magic Resistance:	Standard
Intelligence:	Semi (2 to 4)
Alignment:	Neutral (good)
Size:	L
Level/XP Value:	III/85 + 4/hp

The elven Graceful is a white coated, tall and lean horse that is bred for speed. It is commonly accepted elven-lore that there is "a bit of unicorn" in the Graceful's ancestry; most humans assume that this means unicorn blood, although elves have never confirmed this, and merely smile with a slight look of disappointment if asked. While the Graceful does have the white coat of the unicorn, and the beard and fetlocks (which sometimes have a bluish or silver tint, rather than white) associated with unicorns, there is certainly no evidence of a horn. However, the higher intelligence (relative to the normal horse) is evidence of some heritage with a more intelligent creature.

Faster than a normal horse, the Graceful is the envy of many human horsemen. In addition to their normal fleetness, the Graceful has the ability to gallop at extreme speeds once a day, allowing the Graceful to run at 3x their base speed for a period of 2d8+1 turns. This incredible speed seems to have some magical origin (perhaps the "bit of unicorn"), as the Graceful is no more fatigued after this incredible burst of speed than they would be after a normal gallop. Some authorities speculate that the unicorn's ability to dimension door has somehow translated into an ability to run faster than the wind; a countervailing argument holds that when you've millennia to select the fastest horses and breed them carefully, you'd expect to have a fast blood-line.

The Graceful is able to carry a burden equal to a medium warhorse (up to 400 lbs without any loss of speed, or up to 650 lbs at ½ speed). A medium sized riding horse, the Graceful stands between 15 and 16 hands at the shoulder, weighing about 1,000 to 1,150 lbs.

Wind-Dancer, Pegasus blood

Frequency:	Very Rare (almost never found outside the Elven Courts)
No. Appearing:	1
Armor Class:	7
Movement:	24"+1d4"
Hit Dice:	3
% in Lair:	nil
Treasure Type:	nil
No. of Attacks:	2 (kicks)
Damage:	1d6/1d6
Special Attacks:	none
Special Defences:	leaping, falling
Magic Resistance:	Standard
Intelligence:	Semi (2 to 4)
Alignment:	Neutral (good)
Size:	L
Level/XP Value:	II/50 + 3/hp

The elven Wind-dancer is white coated, as tall as the Graceful, but more heavily muscled. While not as fleet as the Graceful, the Wind-dancer is known as a jumper. Their ability to jump is believed, in both elven lore and the lore of humans, to be a result of the "essence of pegasi" in the Wind-dancer's ancestry. As is the case with the confusion about the Graceful's ancestry, most humans assume that this means pegasi blood. Elves have never confirmed this, and merely smile with a slight look of

disappointment if asked. The Wind-dancer has a white coat of the Pegasus, with grey or bluish highlights at the mane, shoulders and forelegs. They lack the substantial fetlocks that the Graceful has (one way for sharp eyed observers to tell the breeds apart). Similar to the Graceful (and all elven horses), the higher intelligence relative to the normal horse is evidence of a shared heritage with a more intelligent creature.

Faster than a normal horse, the Wind-dancer is the envy of many human horsemen; although the Wind-dancer is not as fast as the Graceful. Instead, the Wind-dancer is a natural jumper, able to jump higher and farther than any horse (15' high and 50' long from a full run, ½ those distances from a standing start), and is able to leap and fall short distances without harm to itself or its rider (equivalent to a limited "feather fall" effect over a 30' distance; should the Wind-dancer leap or fall further than 30', the first 30' of falling damage is ignored although they do suffer damage from the remaining distance fallen).

The Wind-dancer is able to carry a burden equal to a medium warhorse (up to 400 lbs without any loss of speed, or up to 650 lbs at ½ speed). An encumbered Wind-dancer can only jump 10' high and 35' long, and fall 20' without harm; so their riders tend to be lightly armored, lightly equipped elves.

A smaller, leaner horse than the Graceful, the Wind-dancer stands between 14 and 15 hands at the shoulder, weighing about 850 to 950 lbs.

Spells of the Elven Horsemen

Over the centuries, those magic-using elven horsemen hailing from the Elven Courts have turned their creative efforts towards crafting spells that augment or protect their mounts. Some of these spells have made their way into the world at large, although they are rarely used by human horsemen (few of whom have the ability to cast magic-user spells) beyond a few highly accomplished rangers.

Barding

Level: Magic User 2
Type: Abjuration, Conjuration/Summoning
Range: touch
Duration: see below
Area of effect: 1 animal
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 2 segments
Saving Throw: N/A

Developed by a magic-user with an affinity for horses, this spell is not unlike the 1st level magic-user spell **Armor**, although it affords slightly better protection. The spell, while initially intended for horses, is effective on, and strictly limited to animals (defined as non-magical creatures with an intelligence rating of Animal or Semi-). Thus dogs, mules, camels, elephants, etc. can all benefit from the **Barding** spell.

This spell provides a +2 bonus to armor class, increasing to a +3 bonus when the caster reaches 9th level. In addition to the armor class bonus, the beneficiary of the **Barding** spell receives a +1 bonus to all saving throws except fear or charm, against which they gain a +3 bonus.

The spell lasts for 24 hours or until a total of (12 + caster's level) hit points of damage are done to the animal benefiting from the spell.

The material component of the spell is some hair from the subject animal (or shed skin, feather, etc.), which has been twisted together with some iron wire.

Note: this spell is also appropriate for druids, and would be a 3rd level druidic spell.

Feather Hoof

Level: Magic User 2 / Druid 3
Type: Alteration
Range: touch
Duration: 1 turn/level
Area of effect: 1 horse or mount/6 levels
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 2 segments
Saving Throw: N/A

Developed by elven spell caster's who spent time in the saddle, this spell gives a horse or other hoofed

animal the same stealthy abilities as an unarmored elf. The spell acts to dampen the sounds of the horse's hooves on the ground, as well as any harness or vegetation that comes into contact with the mount. While the spell does not camouflage the horse & rider, it does allow the elf to guide his or her mount in a manner that does not foil the elf's natural ability to surprise opponents. Thus, any horse (or in a dungeon environment, a mule) affected by this spell is treated as an unarmored elf for purposes of surprising a foe.

As the caster increases in level, more than one horse may be affected by the spell. At levels 1 to 6, the caster may only affect a single hoofed animal, at levels 7 to 12, the caster may affect 2 hoofed animals, at levels 13 to 18 the caster may affect 3 animals. The progression continues as a caster advances in level. The material component is a feather.

Feather Saddle

Level:	Magic User 2
Type:	Alteration
Range:	touch
Duration:	1 turn/level
Area of effect:	one saddle
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	2 segments
Saving Throw:	N/A

This spell was developed by elven spell casters who served as mounted messengers or scouts as a means of increasing their speed of travel. **Feather Saddle** is cast upon a normal saddle, which must be on the mount at the time of casting. The effect of the spell is to reduce the effective weight of a rider and the rider's gear by 10 lbs/level of the caster, reducing the burden which the mount must carry. The material component is a feather.

Gallop

Level:	Magic User 2
Type:	Enchantment/Charm
Range:	1"
Duration:	1d4+4 hours
Area of effect:	see below
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	1 round
Saving Throw:	none

Another spell developed by elven spell casters who served as mounted messengers or scouts, this is a version of the 1st level spell **Run**, modified for use on a horse or other hoofed animal (it will not work on canines, cats, dragons, or other "mounts"). A creature subject to the **Gallop** spell is able to move at twice the base movement rate for a 5 to 8 hour period without tiring. After the spell expires, the horse must be fed, watered and rested for a period equal to the time it galloped, or else suffer all the effects of fatigue.

The spell affects one creature for every three caster levels (rounded down). Thus a 5th level caster may only affect a single horse, while a 6th level caster may affect 2 horses with a single spell.

Greater Gallop

Level:	Magic User 3
Type:	Enchantment/Charm
Range:	1"
Duration:	1 hour + 1 hour/2 levels
Area of effect:	see below
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	1 round
Saving Throw:	none

An enhanced version of the second level magic-user spell **Gallop**, the greater gallop only works on horses or other hoofed animals (it will not work on canines, cats, dragons, or other "mounts"). A creature subject to the **Greater Gallop** spell is able to move at twice the base movement rate for the duration of the spell, and does so without tiring. Unlike the **Gallop** spell, there is no need for a horse to be fed, watered or rested any more than normal, making the greater gallop spell an effective method of moving overland quickly. However, a **Greater Gallop** spell will only be effective once in any 48 hour period, preventing repeated applications.

This spell effects one creature for every four caster levels (rounded down). Thus a 7th level caster may only affect a single horse, while an 8th level caster may affect 2 horses.

Would Someone Please Mow My Grasslands?

by Michael Corrinet

A new take on the natural carpet that everyone sees but no one notices

Monsters are not the only danger to adventurers; traps, weather, and terrain often serve to interfere or sometimes even kill adventurers. That brings us to one of the gentlest forms of living thing we take for granted: grass.

There have been several grass-based monsters in the history of the game:

- Boring Grass bores into the victim's feet and poisons them, found in the Monstrous Appendix II.
- Grab Grass simply grabs hold and either slows people down or stops them completely, found in the Original D&D sets.

In addition, all sorts of native grasses have been created for various settings. But let's introduce a few new types, designed solely to make the lives of adventurers more exciting. Use the following stats for all grasses unless noted otherwise:

Frequency:	Very Rare
No. Appearing:	1
Armor Class:	10
Move:	Nil
Hit Dice:	1d2 hp
% In Lair:	100%
Treasure Type:	Nil
No. Of Attacks:	Nil
Damage/Attack:	Nil
Special Attacks:	See Below
Special Defenses:	See Below
Magic Resistance:	Standard
Intelligence:	Non-
Alignment:	Neutral
Size:	L (20' To 120' Square)
Level/X.P. Value:	N/A

Fire Grass

Fire grass is a nasty addition to any world, not because it's flammable, but because it can start its own fires. The roots are deep and survive fires, but during certain seasons fire grass, when entered, sends chemical signals through its root system that trigger the stems to ignite. When a party is deep in the middle of such a field, the results can be deadly, causing 1d6 hp damage per round. Inexperienced adventurers can die quickly, since the fire always starts where the adventurers are putting the most stress on the plants (where they are standing on them) and travels outward. An adventurer might run for it, taking damage for as long as it takes to exit the field, typically 1d20 rounds. An experienced adventurer will stand in place where the fire will burn out after three rounds (3d6 hp damage, save for half). The charred bodies of creatures caught in the blaze feed new growth for the plants. The use of such grass helps add 5% to the initiative for fire spells.

Maze Grass

One of the tallest forms of grass in the known world (growing up to 12') with very flexible stems. Entering such a field is likely to block even the tallest adventurer's view, causing the adventurers to get lost quickly. The stems, flexible as they are, quickly spring back upright within a minute and leave little sign that they have been passed through (-50 to tracking).

They also are a favorite for ambushing creatures by animals and monsters that like to stalk their victims. What makes maze grass even worse is that portions of it grow hard, and stick together due to a mold-like growth, causing long walls of it that may take any angle, causing problems traveling through it, often channeling adventurers in odd directions. Creatures that die in the grass serve as nutrients for the grass.

Burrow Seed Grass

This grass is far more than an annoyance. The grass has small seeds that attach to animals and clothing that pass through the grass, and within moments burrow into the creature's skin. The best way to deal with it is to stop, motionless, find the seed with one's hands, and remove it before it burrows in and disappears (1 round). One can feel the discomfort, but it is not enough to cause damage ... at first.

Once inside it continues to burrow, moving throughout the body each time the person moves. Every day it causes 1 point of damage. Cure spells do nothing but seal it in, however a **Cure Disease** spell will remove the seeds. Getting rid of plant bits in one's body becomes a problem for the creative. 1d4 of the seeds attach each minute of travel in such grass. There is a 5% chance each day of each seed leaving the body, but multiple seeds still within the body do multiple points of damage.

One solution is to lie very still, until the seeds are expelled in the breath, or digestive tract.

The biggest problem is they are very attracted to movement and if one has such seeds in one's body, for every 10 seeds absorbed, there is a 1% chance per day, of a heart attack occurring. Once dead, the victim serves as fertilizer for the new plants.

Chia Grass

A symbiotic grass whose seeds often catch and spread on the surfaces of one's body over a period of weeks supplanting one's hair, using the follicles as the center for their roots to attach (saving throw vs. poison negates, effects can be reversed via a cure disease spell). In time, the hair of the individual becomes this grass, and grows in its place. That isn't a real problem, save that one looks very odd. The benefit is that the individual needs only eat half as much as they did before and if they lack any food, they can still survive for twice as long as another individual without the grass as long as there is sunlight. The grass can be styled and otherwise treated like hair, but dies if covered for too long (a possible cure). Dryads often respond favorably to such individuals, which is not always a good thing.

Slime Grass

This grass is a giant slip and slide. Each leaf is covered with a very slippery goo that is almost frictionless, causing adventurers entering the field to be stuck, like on an ice sheet. The grass can be very difficult to return through because once flat, the tips are quite sharp, and it causes 1d6 points of damage per 10' travelled to slide the OTHER way in the grass. (Creatures with AC5 or better are unaffected).

The best solution is to continue in the direction one is going, using some sharp object to push off and slowly push oneself in a circle or toward the direction one is seeking in a wide arc to avoid backing up on the tips of the grass. The grass itself is an excellent component for spells like "grease". It is not flammable and resists flames, taking only half damage.

* * *

Druids have specific relationships and uses for the various grasses mentioned.

Simply using them as guardians is not the only option. Fire grass is an excellent way to create needed brush fires, and spreading it judiciously throughout their domain helps prevent brush from piling up and causing even greater burns.

Maze grass has a special use during one of the druidic holidays, and is often cultivated for just that purpose. The use of mazes is part of the festivities. Burrow seed grass is a danger to all animal life and is destroyed on sight by the druids, while chia grass is deliberately cultivated by some, avoided by others. Green haired druids have a bit of trouble fitting in with other people. Slime grass is deliberately cultivated on slopes for defensive purposes. It makes climbing a hill almost impossible and escaping from a fortress very fast. Boring is seen as dangerous to any animal life, but grab grass makes an excellent guardian for druids.

Scythes and sickles can be very effective for combating slime grass, but it merely slows down burrow grass seeds (which penetrate shoe and boot leather given time) and chia grass (the seeds can still

fall on you), and fire grass bursts into flame within moments after being mowed.

Fire has normal effects on all the new grasses, and maze grass seen from above is quite a sight. Slime grass is actually a slight fire retardant, and fireworks only half as well on it.

Certain spells can be very useful with such grasses:

Entangle cast on a field of fire grass may save trapped individuals from running and thus sustaining less damage. With maze grass it simply ruins the maze. It can interfere with the attacks of boring and blood grass due to their need to grab the individual, and has little effect on chia or burrow grass. Slime grass; simply will not hold a figure with an entangle, they slide right through it.

Pass Without Trace will protect someone passing through boring, grab, bloodgrass, burrow and chia grass, but slime grass is unaffected (save that the spell works – but the person still slides) and maze grass, which reconfigures itself upon passage anyway, though walls will part for such an individual if not too tightly molded.

Banish Blight will cause the walls of maze grass to fall apart, freeing each stalk.

Grass Dart, a wonderful spell for use with these grasses, can be very dangerous:

- Boring grass does 1d4 points of damage and injects its poison.
- Athas bloodgrass does 1d5 points of damage, pouring the grass out of the other end of the shaft.
- Grab grass is unaffected, though it acts as normal grass, as does maze grass or burrow seed grass.
- Fire grass bursts into flame for an extra 1-2 points of damage (nothing catches fire).
- Slime grass simply cannot be thrown.

Plant Growth can make these grasses much more dangerous, increasing the damage done by all of the plants that cause damage, and making maze grass even more formidable. The effects on chia grass are not noticeable, save that it makes it longer.

Spike Growth adds the noted damage, and prevents slime grass from working – painfully.

Other plant spells work normally.

Magic Items

There are a few magic items associated with grass that might come in handy:

Bag of Grain Gathering

This is an open bag with a shoulder strap which gathers all seeds within 5 feet at a gesture. Only seeds of one type go into the bag as determined by the stalk held in the wearer's other hand.

Note: gathering burrow seed grass seeds by this method will utterly destroy the bag and endanger anyone touching it for very long.

GP value 2,000; XP value 500

Star Shuriken of Mowing

This little tool is a simple throwing star. Thrown into a field of grass it will start mowing and continue to mow any of the grass higher than the level it was thrown at where it first hit the first blade of grass. The star will continue for a day in the one direction, then drop. It can be quite difficult to find, and does have a habit of striking objects in the grass that don't go below its level of mowing, stopping if it strikes something it can't go through with one strike (1d3 points of damage). Needless to say, bamboo is out of the question.

GP value 3,000; XP value 750

Cloak of Stalking

In a field of grass, this cloak works like a cloak of elvenkind, but allows movement equal to 1/4th of the normal movement of the individual without affecting the chameleon-like effect. It only works in grasslands. It increases the surprise chance, to the same chances for an invisible individual. The grass is also affected, causing it to appear like it isn't bending around the user, but still standing up

straight without moving. This does not protect the user from the effects of the dangerous grasses.

GP value 6,000; XP value 1,000

Magic User Spells

Mow Grass

Level:	Magic User 1
Type:	Alteration
Range:	40" + 4" per level
Duration:	1 round/10' square
Area of Effect:	20' radius/level
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	2 segments
Saving Throw:	None, unless intelligent (for no damage)

This spell has one function: mowing grass. It cuts all grass to the level desired up to an inch from the ground. There is no save unless the grass has intelligence. Slime grass has a resistance to this spell however, and fire grass bursts into flame when this spell is used. The effects of the spell are permanent until regrown. The material component is a sharp instrument of any kind (not used up but it will be blunt when done).

Weed

Level:	Magic User 2
Type:	Abjuration
Range:	4" + 1"/level
Duration:	Permanent
Area of Effect:	20' radius/level
Components:	S, M
Casting Time:	1 round/10' area
Saving Throw:	None, unless intelligent (for no damage)

This spell removes weeds from an area. If used on an intelligent weed, it works only on that plant. The weed type must be small or smaller, and the entire weed is removed. Other weeds may come to take its place, but at a longer replacement time due to the efficiency of this spell at taking out the roots of previous plants. This spell only works on more active, combative weeds that are one hit dice or less. The material component for this spell is any forked object.

Druid Spells

Weed

Level:	Druid 2
Type:	Abjuration
Range:	4" + 1"/level
Duration:	Permanent
Area of Effect:	20' radius/level
Components:	S, M
Casting Time:	1 round/10' area
Saving Throw:	None, unless intelligent (for no damage)

This spell is identical in all respects to the second level magic user spell of the same name.

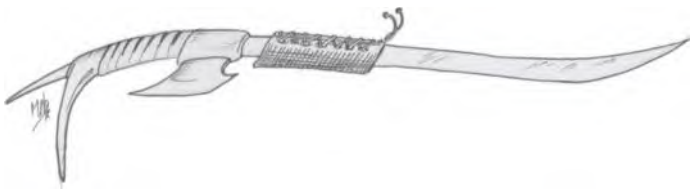
Green Grass

Conjuration	
Level:	7
Range:	40" + 4" per level
Duration:	Permanent
Area of Effect:	20' radius/level
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	3 segments
Saving Throw:	None

This spell produces a field of grass of one of the above types, with the target in the center. A saving throw is allowed IF the characters run like mad. Otherwise, they are trapped when the field finishes growing.

* * *

There is so much more you can do with grass. Okay, no, I'm serious. Stop laughing. Really! I mean REALLY?



Game & Herd Animals of the Lakelands

by Andrew Hamilton

More creatures from the author's campaign

Author's Note: The Monster Manual entry for "Herd Animals" is a catch all entry for a very wide range of animals, and an entry crying out for a little detail (particularly when it comes to large game animals). Certainly, one can refer to entries for bulls, buffalo, and stags for a little more information, but such a need arose when creating random encounter tables for the Lakelands. The Lakelands are a temperate woodlands and foothills region, and the following large mammals are found in the forests and hills of the Lakelands.

This campaign setting, and the animals that live in it, are based on real world animals found in western Canada (which typically follow Bergmann's rule that individuals within species are larger farther from the equator). While this explains the selection of game and herd animals, certain liberties have been taken to adapt these animals to a fantasy game and explain why they are able to survive and thrive in a monster infested wilderness. This article is most certainly not a zoological guide. I dropped a few real world animals as well (caribou, musk ox and pronghorn antelope), as they don't fit in my game world. I'll leave it up to someone else to describe the herd animals of Africa, Australia, South & Central America and Europe.

Game Animals and Combat

While game and herd animals can pose a very real threat to low level characters, and even foolish mid-level characters, they are animals and not monsters, and should be treated as such. In general, these creatures will flee, rather than stand and fight, relying on foot (or hoof) speed to escape danger. This can make hunting a challenge, and could be an adventure hook (as the high level druid wags his finger at the party, "You wounded it, now you track it, kill it and eat it. No wasting game in these woods!").

If cornered, compelled by magic, or defending young, herd and game animals can be quite dangerous; (deer are capable of killing humans and dogs). Bison, elk and moose have the mass and speed to pose a very real threat to a person. While it's not very heroic, running from a herd of stampeding bison is probably very wise. On the other hand, if you are the druid that has convinced the herd of wood bison to stampede and drive out a band of ogre marauders, that's pretty darn heroic.

New Animals

Bighorn Sheep

Frequency:	Uncommon
No. Appearing:	4-24
Armor Class:	7
Movement:	15"
Hit Dice:	2 (2+2 for rams)
% in Lair:	nil
Treasure Type:	nil
No. of Attacks:	1 or 1
Damage:	1d4 (hoof) or 2d4/2d6 (horns, ewe/ram)
Special Attacks:	charge
Special Defences:	leaping, armored head, falling
Magic Resistance:	Standard
Intelligence:	Animal
Alignment:	Neutral
Size:	M
Psionics:	nil
Level/XP Value:	Ram: III/95 xp + 3 xp/hp Ewe: II/44 xp + 2 xp/hp

Bighorn sheep can be found in the high foothills and the mountain ranges that surround the Lakelands. During the summer, the bighorn sheep travel into the higher elevations (over 6,000') to feed, but as deep winter snows set in they move to lower valleys and sheltered mountain faces to graze and seek

refuge from the cold winter winds (2,500 to 5,000' elevation). The sheep eat grasses & shrubs.

Well known for its impressive, curled horns, some hunters prize the skull and horns of old rams as trophies. Dwarves have respect for these mountain dwelling animals, although they are too serious a folk to hunt for trophies. The bighorn sheep, while tasty, are not regularly hunted as game due to the remoteness of their habitat (and proximity of easier game, such as deer, to the communities of the Lakelands).

A mature ram will weigh between 130 and 310 lbs, stands 3' to 3'5" at shoulder and has a body length of 5'9" to 6'7". Their massive horns may weigh up to 30 lbs. The horns grow throughout the ram's life, and have a full curl at 8 years of age. A ram can deliver a devastating blow with its head if it charges (they clash at speeds of 35 miles per hour or higher), causing 2d6 hps damage with a charge (and striking at +3 to hit). The horns and skull of the rams are so tough that they only suffer ½ damage from blunt weapons that strike them in the head.

An ewe weighs 80 to 190 lbs, stands 2'6" to 3' at shoulder, has a body length of 4'6" to 5'7". Ewes also have horns, although theirs only grow 8 to 10" long, and are straighter & more slender than a ram's horns.

Bighorn sheep are highly agile, and regularly climb cliffs & make astonishing leaps. They can leap 15' high and 30' long. When leaping down, they ignore the first 20' of "falling damage", and additional falling damage is reduced by -1 hp/die. Bighorn sheep can stand on ledges 2" wide, and often make it to places that human climbers would have great difficulty accessing.

Other than some infrequent human and humanoid predation, bighorn sheep are preyed upon by mountain lions, giant eagles and owls, or wolves (when the bighorn sheep descend into their winter ranges).

Lakeland Deer

Frequency:	Common
No. Appearing:	1 or 4-16
Armor Class:	7
Movement:	24"
Hit Dice:	1+2
% in Lair:	nil
Treasure Type:	nil
No. of Attacks:	1 or 1
Damage:	1d4 (kick) or 2d4 (antlers)
Special Attacks:	nil
Special Defences:	surprised only on 1, leaping
Magic Resistance:	Standard
Intelligence:	Animal
Alignment:	neutral
Size:	M
Psionics:	nil
Level/XP Value:	II/36 xp + 2 xp/hp

The deer of the Lakelands are smaller than their elk and moose cousins, with an average doe weighing 220 lbs, and a buck weighing 260 lbs. The largest bucks will weigh 450 lbs, but these are very rare. The Lakeland Deer stand 3 to 4' at the shoulder, with a body length of 6 to 8 feet (including the short tail). Generally light tan with darker markings around the neck and head (brown, almost black on some individuals), the Lakeland

deer have white "socks" and a white tail that they "flash" as they flee from danger.

Lakeland deer are fairly quick and exceptionally agile (equal to a galloping horse in speed, and far more maneuverable, suffering no loss of speed in all but the most overgrown and dense of forests). They also have incredible leaping abilities, able to leap as high as 10', or as far as 30', in a single bound. They use this leaping ability to clear obstacles while fleeing predators.

Lakeland deer are prized for their meat, and hunted by the human and elven inhabitants of the Lakelands, as well as being favored prey of wolves and mountain lions. Lakeland deer survive by being alert (they are surprised only 1 in 6), and fleeing at the first sign of danger. If forced into combat (i.e. cornered, defending a fawn, etc.) a doe or buck will kick with their front hooves (1d4 hps damage). A buck has antlers in late summer and fall, and during this period of time they can attack with the antlers for 2d4 hps of damage (but they lack the charge attack of their larger cousins the elk & moose).

Elk

Frequency:	Common	
No. Appearing:	1 or 1d20	
Armor Class:	7	
Movement:	18"	
Hit Dice:	4 (bull) or 3 (cow)	
% in Lair:	nil	
Treasure Type:	nil	
No. of Attacks:	1 or 2 (kick or antlers)	
Damage:	1d6 or 1d6/1d6	
Special Attacks:	nil	
Special Defences:	nil	
Magic Resistance:	Standard	
Intelligence:	Animal	
Alignment:	Neutral	
Size:	L	
Psionics:	nil	
Level/XP Value:		
	Cow:	II/35 xp + 3 xp/hp
	Bull:	III/60 xp + 4 xp/hp

The elk is a large member of the deer family, and looks very much like a deer, although the smallest elk is three times the size of a deer, and the bull elk have much larger and more intimidating antlers. A bull elk averages 715 lbs, although the largest bulls can reach 1,300 lbs. They stand 5' at the shoulder, and have a body length of 8' to 9'. The antlers of a bull elk (which are carried for 6 months of the year, have a 5' spread and weigh 40 lbs).

An elk cow is much smaller than a bull, averaging 500 lbs, and standing 4' at the shoulder with a body length of 6 to 7'. Cows do not have antlers.

Bull elk are often solitary, particularly when they are carrying antlers, but are known to gather in herds after they have dropped antlers. A big bull will gather a harem of 20 or more cows if possible. They bugle during rut, a sound that carries a mile, and it's not unusual to hear the bugling when traveling in the forests and hills of the Lakelands during the fall rut.

Despite their size, elk are swift runners, able to reach a top speed equal to that of a fast horse.

Elk is a prized game meat amongst the human and elven hunters of the Lakelands region, and the hides are tanned and used to make garments and other leather goods. Antlers, both those found dropped in the woodlands and those harvested from hunted animals, are used for a variety of decorative purposes, and sometimes carved into tools. Some

druids and herbalists/healers extoll the virtues of the velvet that covers new antlers, and which the elk rub off by rubbing their antlers against trees (DM's choice as to whether the elk velvet is of any real use).

Moose

Frequency:	1 or 2
No. Appearing:	1 or 1d3
Armor Class:	7
Movement:	24"/6" (swim)
Hit Dice:	4+2
% in Lair:	nil
Treasure Type:	nil
No. of Attacks:	1 or 1
Damage:	1d6 (kick) or 2d6 (antlers)
Special Attacks:	none
Special Defences:	none
Magic Resistance:	Standard
Intelligence:	Animal
Alignment:	Neutral
Size:	L
Psionics:	nil
Level/XP Value:	III/90 xp + 5 xp/hp

A moose stands 4 to 6 feet at the shoulder (although some rare bulls approach 7'), and is 8' to 11' in body length. The average moose weighs 1,500 to 1,800 lbs, although the largest bull might approach 2,000 lbs. The bulls have antlers that span 6' (although they drop these antlers in mid-winter, and grow them back in late spring). Surprisingly quick, a moose can outrun a horse on flat ground, both in a sprint (35 mph) or a long distance trot (20 mph). They are also excellent swimmers, and often swim distances of several miles to cross lakes or reach islands (swimming at a speed of 6 mph).

The moose looks similar in silhouette to a horse, and the residents of the Lakelands lovingly refer to them as "swamp donkeys", a reference to their body shape and the fact they are often seen in wading shoulder deep in swamps and ponds to browse on aquatic plants.

The moose is generally solitary, except during mating season, or when a cow has a calf. They are big enough, fast enough, and with a powerful kick (1d6 damage) that discourages most predators. A bull with a full rack is able to gore and throw attackers, as well as kick. The antlers cause 2d6 hps damage.

Moose are normally found in forests and scrub browsing on willows, tall grasses and shrubs, or wading in ponds and swamps. They do not like to bend down and graze grasses, so they avoid open grasslands.

Moose is a prized meat amongst the hunters of the Lakelands, and wolf packs are often seen hunting these solitary creatures (although great cats tend to avoid them).

Mountain Goats

Frequency:	Rare
No. Appearing:	1d4 in summer, 5d10 in winter
Armor Class:	5
Movement:	18"
Hit Dice:	2
% in Lair:	nil
Treasure Type:	nil
No. of Attacks:	1
Damage:	1d6
Special Attacks:	none
Special Defences:	resist normal cold, climbing, fall up to 20' without damage
Magic Resistance:	Standard
Intelligence:	Animal
Alignment:	Neutral
Size:	M
Level/XP Value:	II/44 xp + 2 xp/hp

The mountain goat is occasionally encountered by the few brave residents of the Lakelands that foray high into the northern, eastern or southern mountains. This hardy creature is generally found living above the treeline year round, at elevations of up to 13,000', well above the normal hunting territory of wolves, mountain lions, bears or humans & humanoids. Occasionally mountain goats fall prey to eagles (especially giant eagles), cloud giants, dragons, or dwarven hunters. They have no trouble surviving winter temperatures of -46C and winds of 160 kph. Mountain goats forage on tough grasses and shrubs, conifers, lichens and mosses. Solitary or found in small groups during the summer, mountain goats congregate in larger groups during the winter.

The mountain goat has a thick wool coat, stark white to help it blend in with snow and the grey and white rock of the high alpine environment, and a beard under its chin. The coat is thick and tough enough that it gives them added protection against injury (hence AC 5) and protection from cold (as per the clerical spell **Resist Cold**). They have black horns, 6 to 11" in length, with a slight backward curve, and they can use these horns to fight off predators (or clash with each other in displays of dominance). The average mountain goat weighs less than 180 lbs, although the largest billies can weigh 300 lbs (and males are 20 to 30% heavier than females). They are about 3' tall at the shoulder, with a body length of 4' to 6'.

While mountain goats are slower than deer or other herd animals, they are extremely agile and surefooted, can climb 60 degree pitches without undue effort, and have been known to make downward leaps of 30' or more without injury.

Rarely hunted by humans, the dwarves prize these creatures for their wool, meat and horns (which are often used as knife handles for ornate or well-crafted knives and daggers). The dwarves are careful not to overhunt the mountain goats however, as the dwarves have a deep respect for this hardy, bearded species (the reason that calling a Lakeland region dwarf "an old goat" or "tough old goat" is a sign of respect).

Wood Bison

Frequency:	Uncommon
No. Appearing:	5 to 40 (occasionally more)
Armor Class:	6
Movement:	24" (sprint 36" for 6+d6 rounds)
Hit Dice:	5 (bull) or 4 (cow)
% in Lair:	nil
Treasure Type:	nil
No. of Attacks:	2
Damage:	1d8/1d8
Special Attacks:	charge, trample, stampede
Special Defences:	surprised only on 1
Magic Resistance:	standard
Intelligence:	animal
Alignment:	N
Size:	L

Level/XP Value: bull IV/170 xp + 5 xp/hp + SA
cow III/110 xp + 4 xp/hp + SA

The wood bison is a massive herbivore that lives in temperate forests, foraging on grasses, shrubs, and sedges. A full grown bull weighs 1,900 to 2,200 lbs, standing up to 6' tall at the shoulder with a body length of 11 to 12'6". Their horns may grow to be 2' long, but are thick and sturdy, with sharp points. A cow is smaller than the bull, averaging only 1,200 lbs in weight, and has proportionally smaller horns (which are still capable of inflicting serious injuries).

In combat, a wood bison will use its horns to gore a predator or attacker (each horn causes 1d8 hps of damage), and they will charge if they have 30' of room (striking at +2 to hit and causing 4d6 hps of damage). If facing man-sized or smaller creatures (including size L creatures that are 4' or shorter at the shoulder, like most great cats), the wood bison may also trample the creature for 1d6 hit points of damage and requiring a save vs. paralysis or be knocked prone. Subsequent trampling attacks against a prone creature are automatically successful (and necessitate additional saving throws each round).

Wood bison have excellent hearing & smell, and are capable of smelling a predator up to 2 miles away. They do have poor eyesight, and will startle if a creature gets close to them before being seen. A startled bison may flee, or charge (particularly if they are defending calves). Bison are also surprisingly fleet of foot, able to run at speeds of up to 35 miles per hour.

Wood bison can be found in herds of up to 200 members, although a herd of this size will be scattered over an area grazing. It is more common to find the wood bison in smaller groups, number up to 40 creatures.

Wood bison have a 20 to 40 year lifespan, and a healthy herd has little to fear from normal predators. A mature cow is more than capable of driving off wolves, mountain lions, and even grizzly bears. A few bull bison represent a challenge that a pack of dire wolves or smilodons will pass up. Occasionally ogres or giants will hunt wood bison, as they prize bison for their meat and hides, just as human and elven hunters do.

Other Wildlife of the Lakelands

For those interested, there are other "normal" animals found in the Lakelands campaign setting that are already described in the Monster Manual and other published resources. These include:

- Badgers
- Bear (Black & Brown)
- Boars (Wild & Giant)
- Coyotes (using the statistics for wild dogs)
- Mountain Lions (Smilodons can be found in the south-eastern mountain foothills)
- Ravens (of all sizes, although the giant ravens of the woodlands are neutral alignment)
- Squirrels (because carnivorous flying squirrels are cool)
- Yale (from Creature Catalog III, published in Dragon #101)
- Wolves and Mist Wolves (described in Greyhawk Adventures, in the south, near the borders of the Elven Courts)

Giant animals are also encountered in the Lakelands, although they are all Rare or Very Rare Frequency, with the exception of the Common Giant Porcupine). The giant animals include Dire Wolves, Eagles, Owls, Skunks, and Wolverines. Along the lakeshores, ponds and river banks giant animals such as otters, beavers, various fish (such as gar) in the deep lakes and larger rivers, frogs, and the occasional snapping turtle can be encountered.

Trees and Shrubs of the Lakelands

by Andrew Hamilton

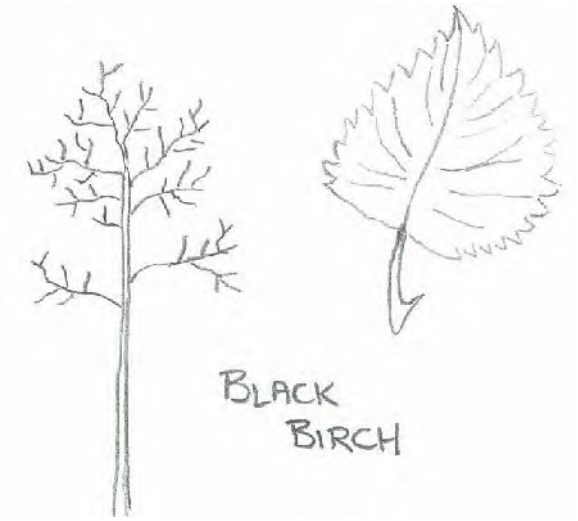
Trees and shrubs to flesh out wilderness adventures!

Author's Note: *The contents of this article are taken from the background of the author's personal campaign world, the Lakelands, which uses the non-weapon proficiencies described in the DSG, WSG and OA, as well as the skills attributed to the Barbarian PC class. Some of the trees and shrubs described in this article, as well as other herbs and sedges of the Lakelands, provide bonuses to those skilled in herbalism, healing, or other non-weapon proficiencies. The descriptions and characteristics of the trees and shrubs are general to allow the vegetation to be used in any temperate forest setting, and in campaigns that do not use NWPs.*

The Lakelands are a mixture of rural and wilderness terrain, farmland carved out of valley bottoms and rolling hills covered by sprawling forests. The forests of the lowlands and valley floor are predominantly deciduous hardwoods, but the foothills and mountains that define the perimeter of the Lakelands are predominantly coniferous evergreens. The south faces and crests of the highest hills are covered by scrub and tall grass, and the lowlands are swamp or ponds. While some look at the wilderness and see nothing but lonely, dangerous land, others look at it and see great wealth. Hunters and trappers bring game and pelts out of the wilderness, adventurers seek ruins and exotic monsters, and woodcutters fell timber for use as lumber, firewood, or to make charcoal. However, those who really know the trees, shrubs and other plants of the Lakelands know that there are plants that flourish in these forests that may literally be worth more than their weight in gold.

Black Birch

Description: The black birch is a tall slender tree, often growing over 50' in height, and its crown usually starts 1/2 to 2/3 of the way up the trunk. It has the classic white, papery bark, and looks very similar to the paper and white birch trees, with the exception that the teeth on the leaf are larger, and the branches in the crown grow upwards, they don't weep.



Habitat: Black Birch grows in moist, poorly drained, but not flooded soils. They are most commonly found along creek and pond banks, or in low-lying hollows in hilly regions. Black birch will be mixed in with other birch and alder species, and sometimes willows.

Utility & Lore: This tree has an oily, bitter sap, and when burned it burns with thick black smoke that is heavier than air. The smell is reminiscent of oil, and the thick black smoke can leave people choking and gagging, with watering eyes.

The wood and bark of the black birch may be chopped into bits and soaked in large tubs, and the oily sap will release and rise to the top, where it is skimmed and strained, making perfectly good lamp oil (it does not burn fiercely enough to be used as flaming oil).

The residents of Sedge's Crossing actually cultivate Black Birch along the creek, as they like to use fires made of the wood of the black birch to smoke out ankheg dens or giant ant nests.

Demon Cane

AKA Fiend Claws

Description: This shrub normally grows 6 to 10' in height, but rare patches grow up to 20' in height. The wood is tough and wiry, resistant to axe and machete blows, and the whole of the plant (stem, leaves, and even roots) is covered with tough, long thorns. The thorns are often 2" in length, and brittle, having a tendency to break off in wounds.

Habitat: Demon Cane tends to grow (or at least establish) on hillsides, and is a deep-rooting, drought resistant species. A successful competitor, once Demon Cane is established, it will slowly spread choke out all other vegetation in an area.

Utility & Lore: Demon Cane is reviled by ranchers for the damage it can cause to livestock, and for the land it sterilizes. Many shepherds and ranchers will immediately attempt to root out, chop down and burn any patches of Demon Cane that establish on their ranges.

Demon Cane has seen use by druids and some land-owners as a hedge, creating a semi-fortified barrier that will harm those who force their way through it (1d4 hps of damage for each 5' of hedge pushed through). As a few reckless creatures that have threatened druidic groves have learned Demon Cane is particularly fearsome when used as the target of an entangle spell (those entangled in the Demon Cane suffer 1d4 hp per round of damage).

Goblin Wood

AKA Punk Wood

Description: A gnarly, twisted tree, Goblin Wood is related to aspen, and grows to a height of 40' to 50', and the trunk can be quite thick. Fast growing and brittle, strong winds tend to break off branches, and more branches will shoot from the break, contributing to the gnarled look. The bark of the goblin wood is a pale olive to light brown, smooth on newer growth, but getting ridged and rough on old growth (over 10 years of age).

Habitat: Goblin Wood grows best in shady areas that are well drained, and is often found on north facing slopes of hills. The Goblin Wood tends to propagate through suckering, and is normally found in small stands and copses.

Utility & Lore: This tree grows so quickly (several feet per year) that the wood is soft and brittle, and a strong wind causes branches to break off and fall to the ground, while other trees stand undamaged.

Lumber made from Goblin Wood cracks and splinters, and bears about 1/10 the load of pine or spruce, making it of little use for building materials. The wood burns quick and cold, having no value as firewood, and it rots so quickly that it isn't useful in fences. It is this complete uselessness that earned the Goblin Wood its name. That, and the fact that Goblin Wood spreads from the roots (as well as by seed), and weeding it out of a copse or stand of trees is nearly impossible once it takes hold (as many a frustrated apple orchard owner can attest).

One use of Goblin Wood, although not a common one, is to use the lumber in traps. The weakness of the lumber and tendency to fail under load makes it useful as a means of covering pit traps, being a "breaking" step that triggers a trap, etc. While some claim that the use of the wood in traps is what gave this tree its name, seasoned adventurers know that goblins rarely build such sophisticated traps, and that the tree received its name solely because of the uselessness of the plant.

Grey Dogwood

Description: This relative of red osier dogwood has similar looks and shape, with the exception that the bark is a silver-grey coloration instead of red. The

grey dogwood has small white flowers that mature into white berries with a black seed visible through the skin. The leaves are dark green (although grey dogwood that grow in deep shade may have pale green or variegated leaves). Like the red dogwood, the grey dogwood is a sprawling shrub that grows 4' to 10' and up to 15' diameter base as it spreads out from a central stem by stolons.

Habitat: The grey dogwood tends to grow in shady areas, typically as underbrush in mixed hardwood forests (it does poorly underneath conifers). It does well in well drained and wet soils, and is often found with willows and birch in marshy areas.

Utility & Lore: The berries and leaves of the grey dogwood can be used to make a paste that lessens the pain of burns, and induces quick healing (heal an additional 1 hp/day of fire and acid damage, in addition to any other benefits of healing or herbalism non-weapon proficiencies and skills). The berries are edible, but have an unpleasant taste.

The halflings of the Lakelands often harvest grey dogwood (along with red dogwood) to strip and cure the bark. The cured bark is then shredded and mixed with tobacco. Humans and dwarves find the taste of this "half-tobacco" unpleasant and avoid it.

Horn-Nut

Description: This tree is tall and slender with a large globular crown that starts about half-way up the trunk. The tree often grows to 80 or even 100' in height, although the trunk will be no more than 3' in diameter at breast height. Like walnuts, the leaves are long compound leaves, 9 leaflets sharing a stem.

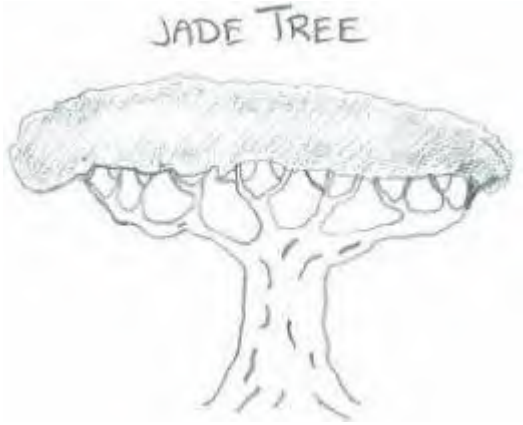
Habitat: This tree will be found in mixed stands of hardwoods in well drained soils, normally in upland environments. It does poorly in shade, so immature trees will be found growing in disturbed areas or on exposed hillsides. Mature trees tend to rise above surrounding hardwoods.

Utility & Lore: This large, long-lived tree is a relative of the black walnut, and its wood has similar coloring and grain (making it sought after for use in furniture). Its nut is most prized however, as it is large (the shell is six to eight times the size of the walnut (often a foot long!), and the fleshy interior is only two to three times the size of a walnut). The shell is often polished smooth, highlighting a beautiful swirling pattern, and is used in place of horn on the handles of coffers, cutlery, etc. The meaty part of the nut tastes very much like walnut, and is often found in soups, stews and on the dinner table in the Lakelands.

Jade Tree

AKA Green Maple

Description: A slow-growing, short tree, rarely topping 40', the Jade Tree will have a very broad and sturdy trunk (often 6' at the base), and grows from a single stem, with a broad, umbrella like canopy starting about 2/3 up the trunk. The leaves are dark green, and the bark (which is quite smooth) and wood are a pale green color. The seeds are similar to maple seeds (a winged seed), but the Jade Tree is notoriously difficult to cultivate.



Habitat: Jade Trees are normally found growing in a mixed stand of hardwoods on level or gently rolling terrain, being shorter they are normally found near

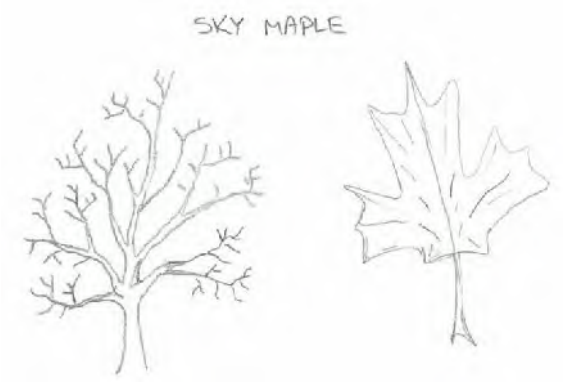
the edges of the stand or along meadows or other openings, rather than in the centre of the stand where they would be overshadowed by taller trees.

Utility & Lore: This tree is slow growing, long living, producing a fine grained hard wood with a rich deep green color reminiscent of jade. The bark and leaves of this tree can be used to make a green oil, used to polish and stain wood, and the wood itself is often carved into bowls, goblets, etc. and treated as a jade substitute. The wood itself, once cured and oiled (a year to 18 month long process), is worth about 1/5 jade's value.

Some herbalists and healers claim that a mortar and pestle made of jade wood has strong anti-toxin properties, and that the oil, used sparingly, will also assist with detoxifying wounds. Other herbalists & healers claim that this is so much bunk. (In game terms, using these materials in conjunction with the healing & herbalism proficiencies will provide a +2 bonus to any saving throws against poison and infected wounds).

Sky Maple

Description: Named for its blue leaves and slight bluish tinged bark, sky maple is an average sized maple. It has a nice straight grained wood. Its canopy spreads out starting about ¼ of the way up the trunk, and it makes an attractive tree in those cases where it is cultivated.



Habitat: The sky maple is usually found in mixed stands of maple (including sweet or sugar maple), oak, horn nuts, and other hardwoods. It grows well on level or gently rolling, well drained soils, and is able to thrive in shady conditions, meaning that it can survive underneath a canopy of older, taller trees.

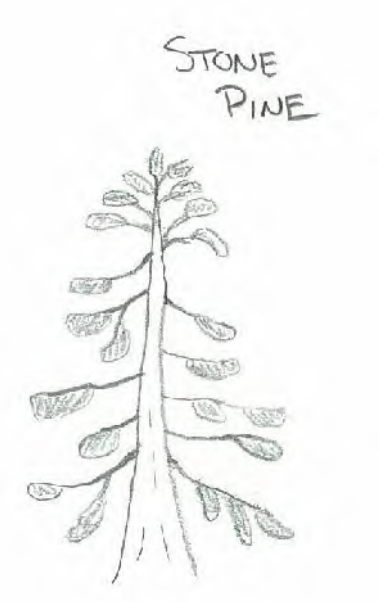
Utility & Lore: The straight grained wood cures nicely, and carpenters, cabinet makers and furniture makers like to work with it. The grain has a slight blue coloration separating the bands of light gold wood, and if treated with blue-dyed oil, the wood takes on a beautiful blue-glow, and can be polished to a very hard, almost mirror-like finish.

Sky maple is also used to make a pale blue dye. The leaves are harvested and boiled for 2 to 3 days in large cauldrons, stirred until the leaves become a mash. The mixture is then cooled, and the leaf sludge strained out. The liquid is then boiled again until a thick, sticky liquor remains. This liquor is spread on pans and sun-dried. The chalky paste is then ground up and packaged, ready to be used as a pigment in paints or wool dyes.

The sap of the sky maple is neither sweet or blue, and is not collected for any commercial reason.

Stone Pine

Description: This pine tree has a broader base relative to its trunk height than most pines do, making it look a little squat. The stone pine does not have thick branches, although it has long, coarse needles (over 4" long, growing in clusters of 3), and its cones are quite large (about 6" to 8" long, and 3" in diameter). The stone pine is very slow growing, and it can take four or five decades for it to reach a height of 40'; the tallest specimens (over 60' high) are reportedly over 200 years old.



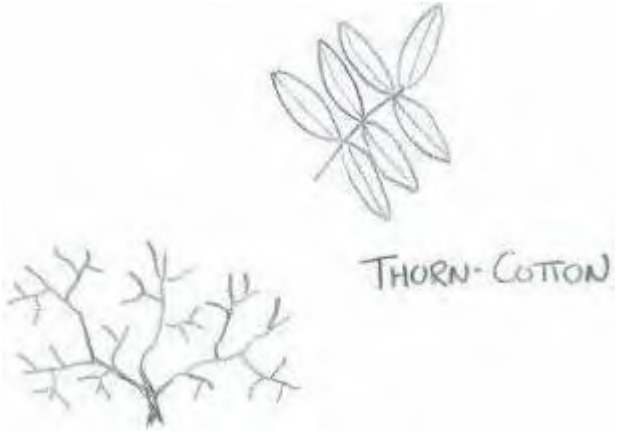
Habitat: Stone pines grow on hilltops and rocky outcroppings, more commonly found in the high foothills and lower mountains than in the lowlands. They

are hardy and strongly rooted, withstanding fierce winter winds, deep snows, and even forest fires.

Utility & Lore: Unlike most pines and conifers which are soft wood, the wood of the stone pine is extremely hard, particularly if it is cut and kiln dried. Kiln-dried stone pine is so hard that saws, knives, planes and other metals tools used to work or shape it will dull quickly. Seasoned foresters claim that cutting down a stone pine is five to six times as much work as cutting down an oak of the same size. Despite the difficulty of working the wood, stone pine is prized for use in the manufacture of doors, chests, armor and shields. A few clerics, monks and magic-users prize their stone staves (which are 50% heavier than a normal stave, but cause +1 damage due to the weight).

Items made from stone pine receive a +2 saving throw to item saving throws (+3 vs. normal and crushing blows), although working with the wood is difficult and time-consuming due to its hardness. Typically an item made from stone pine will cost 50% to 200% more than a similar item made from normal wood.

Thorn Cotton



Description: This short shrub grows 3' to 4' in height, often with a radius of 5' to 6'. After it loses its leaves in the winter, the bare branches look like a tangled mess, and the sharp little thorns (only ¼") make the shrub a nice safe place for little birds to hide in, or rabbits and mice to hide under. The thorn cotton has small, narrow leaves that grow in tight clusters along a branch. It's defining characteristic is a later season bloom, which then turns to seeds with a greyish, cottony but scratchy, tuft.

Habitat: The thorn cotton typically grows on dry, thin soils, such as hilltops or exposed hillsides. It is a tough plant, and only the most hungry of goats will make a meal of it.

Utility & Lore: The shrub has a tendency to invade pasture and rangelands, and it is of little interest to most grazing animals. It is tolerated by ranchers and shepherds because of its flower however. Locals will often be seen in the mid-autumn, gathered in large groups, hand picking the cottony tufts, taking them home to comb out the seeds and the tuft, and spinning it into tough, cotton like fabric. Many of the clothes, especially the tough pants and jackets worn by working men, are made of this material. Efforts to sell thorn-cotton fabric outside of the Lakelands have met with little success, as tailors and merchants consider it to be "poor peoples' fabric". Despite this (or possibly because of it) Lakelanders have respect for the cloth and are proud to wear clothes made of thorn cotton.

Thornbite

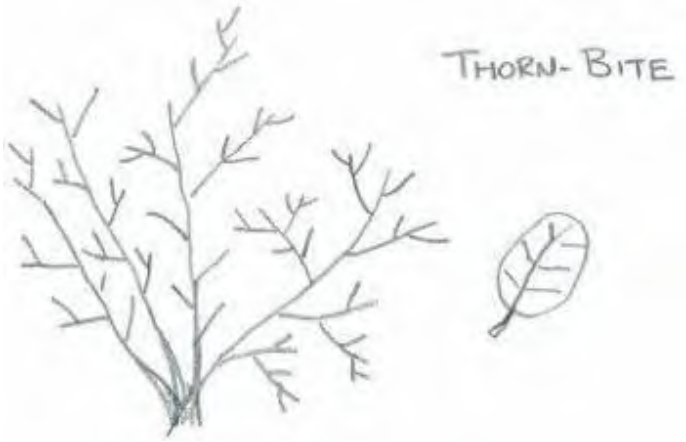
AKA Dwarfberry

Description: Lacking any thorns, one may wonder why this short shrub received the name Thornbite. This short shrub, similar to buffalo berry, has an orange berry (which is typically plump and healthy looking). Anyone tasting the berry will discover why – it tastes horrible and is quite astringent, the taste is likely to cause nausea and vomiting, and the tongue will swell, causing all sense of taste to be lost for a day or two. The thornbite shrub is low to the ground, normally only a foot or two high, in rare cases growing to 4' in height

Habitat: The thornbite shrub grows as ground cover in open forests and thickets, or along open hillsides. It does well in sun and partial shade, and tolerates thin soils remarkably well. It also grows in the lower mountain valleys, occasionally being found as high as the tree line.

Utility & Lore: Astute observers will notice that birds, squirrels and bears all avoid this berry (a few

species of field mouse happily eat these berries, as do wild boar), providing an indication of its unpleasant taste. However, despite its taste the thornbite berry has a very potent medicinal property. Eating a handful of raw berries provides the consumer a +3 save vs. ingested poison (if the person has been exposed to the poison in the last few minutes, or in game terms, 1 turn or less). This is increased to +4 if the berries are made into a paste prepared by an individual with skill in herbalism and healing (such as a druid). Successfully keeping a dose of Thornbite berries down requires a successful Constitution check (rolling below the Con on d20, made at a -3 bonus if the person has help, such as someone holding their mouth shut and plugging their nose to force swallowing).



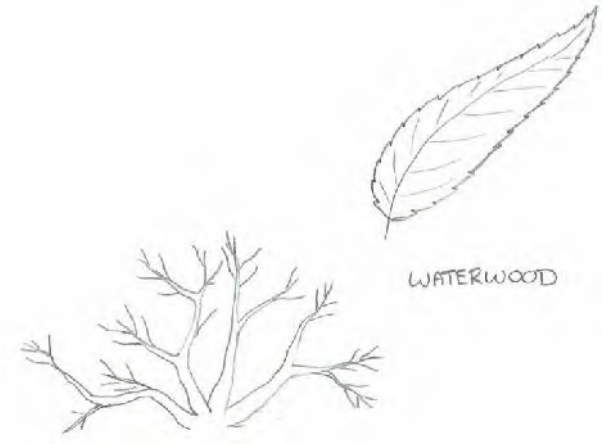
Surprisingly, it is the elves of the Elven Court who call this the Dwarfberry, their way of complimenting the dwarves and comparing its anti-toxin characteristics with the dwarven resistance to poison.

Waterwood

AKA Water Willow or Wet Willow

Description: Water Willow is small, with the trunks rarely growing to the size of a man's wrist, and perhaps half again the height of a man. It grows as a number of trunks from a central point, radiating out like some.

Habitat: The Water Willow grows in semi-submerged conditions, and is thus only found in the swamps and along the shores of creeks, rivers, ponds and lakes of the Lakelands. It is fast growing though, and tough, and serves to protect many shore lines from erosion and the spring floods.



Utility & Lore: Waterwood burns slowly, and must be tended or mixed with other fuels to keep it burning. This property is retained when Waterwood pulp is used to make paper. The resulting paper, while not of the highest quality, tending to be quite fibrous and rough, is slow to catch fire and burn. Compared to normal paper, the paper made from Waterwood receives a +3 saving throw vs. normal and magical fire.

Whip Willow

AKA Rope Willow

Description: This willow is a thin branched and tangled shrub, rarely growing to more than 15' in height. It has a dark grey bark with black ridges, and it's leaves are very long and thin. A fast growing shrub, whip willow is also very wiry and tough, hard to cut with an axes or machete as the wood “springs” and flexes, in addition to being very flexible and tough.

Habitat: Whip Willow is found along the shores of ponds and sloughs, and the floodplains of small creeks and rivers. It can withstand immersion for a few months, and easily survives the spring floods.

Utility & Lore: The leaves of whip willow seem to be a favorite food of moose and deer, and locals like to keep stands of whip willow in the region to assist in hunting and to keep stream banks intact during the flood seasons. Whip Willow branches are also used in basket weaving, or the weaving of bins, furniture and useful items (although such items are

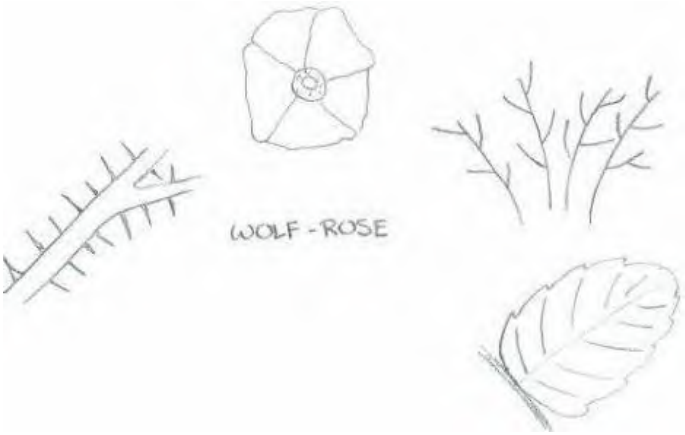
sneered at as being "quite country" by city dwellers).

There is also a commercial use for whip willow, making rope (hence its other common name, rope willow). Whip Willow is soaked in vats of water, then pounded with mallets to separate the long wood fibres. After repeated soaking and poundings, the separated fibres are rolled and woven together, making rope that is as flexible as hemp rope, but slightly stronger (20% more hit points of damage are required to sever the rope). Unfortunately, rope made from Whip Willow is flammable, and one must be careful of where and how one uses this rope.

Wolf Rose

Description: A relative of the wild rose, the Wolf Rose has a chalky grey flower and the stems are covered with fine thorns., the leaves are dark green, with greyish variegation. It is not as attractive a plant as the wild rose (with its beautiful pink flower), but it is far from ugly. The wild rose is a shrub, and it can grow to a height of 10', often as a tangled thicket.

Habitat: Wolf rose grows in the same habitat as wild rose, in open forests and thickets as one of the shrubs in the underbrush. It can thrive in sun or shade, but does not do well in wet or flooded soils.



Utility & Lore: Wolf rose is a useful plant, if one knows how to use it. Hunters and grandmothers know that the rose hips can be used to brew a nutritious tea (able to ward off scurvy, and provide the base for a hearty soup). Most importantly, the tea made from Wolf Rose Hips helps fight disease (including magical disease, providing a +2 bonus to any saving throws against disease during any period where a person is taking a daily dose of Wolf Rose Tea).

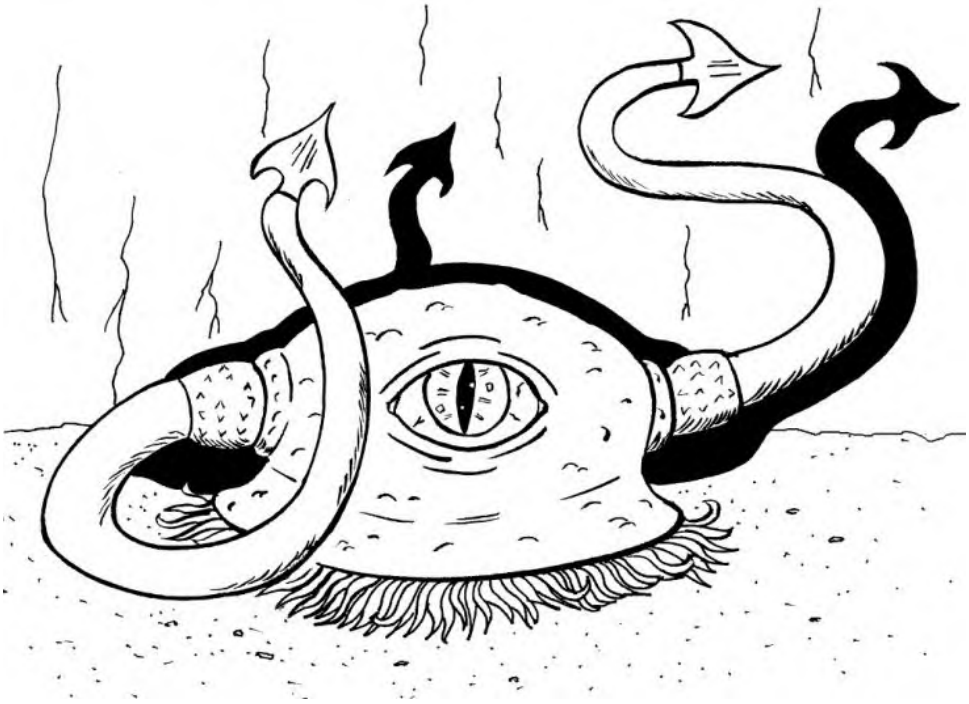
Attend, all strong warriors and knowledgeable spell casters:

Baron Nolwin is seeking a small to moderate number of agents to clear his recently acquired forest land, the wood known as Green Oaks, of poachers, trespassers, and squatters. Applicants should have their own equipment and mounts, and will each receive a stipend of two gold per week and one additional gold for each person they eject, kill, or otherwise remove from the wood. A further fee of one thousand five hundred gold will be paid for the removal or otherwise disposal of the false druid, Algon Bramblehands, and his followers.

If your arm is strong or your mind quick you can further the extent of civilized lands and push back the wilderness, and receive good pay for doing it, too. The Baron is accepting applications daily from mid-morning to lunch.

Stat This Monster

drawing by John Fredericks



What is this monster???

An *&* editor saw and really liked a picture the artist, John Fredericks, drew and posted on his web site. When asked if we could use it for *& Magazine*, John indicated it was an iconic monster from *Star Frontiers* and he was concerned there would be a trademark violation if we used it.

Fair enough.

The *& Publishing Group* strives to observe both the letter and the spirit of the law, so we switched to **Plan B**.

What is **Plan B** you ask?

The picture above is **Plan B**. John drew this, not the same as, but inspired by his original drawing. He calls it the *harpoonapus*.

Is it a malevolent intelligence? Is it a benign animal? Is it an organic dust mop? ***What is it???***

THAT is the question we ask of our readers – what is this thing?

YOU decide what this creature is. Good, evil, in between? Huge (10' across), tiny (3"), or in between? Intelligent or non-intelligent? Is it from the Prime Material Plane? Is it from an Alternate Prime Material Plane? Is it from an elemental plane, or from an outer plane?

Tell us what you think!

Name the monster and provide its statistics and a basic description (one to two pages). Send your result to submissions@and-mag.com

The staff will vote for their favorite, and we will publish the favorite two or three in a future issue of *& Magazine*.

Interview with Bill Barsh, Pacesetter Games

by Andrew Hamilton

PACESETTER
Games & Simulations

This article is a bit of a departure for **&** Magazine. *We have focused on providing game related material, and after one review decided that kind of content wasn't quite right for us. But we had internal discussions around interviews. We decided there is a place for interviews in our pages. But who to interview?*

Certainly the "giants" of the game seem like an obvious choice, as there seems to be an insatiable curiosity as to what the people who were there at the beginning think now, what they thought then, the way they play, etc. This is evident in the way every word of their posts in forums is examined, the placement of commas and semi-colons agonizingly studied, and they are asked a never-ending stream of questions. It is that never ending stream of questions that stopped me in my tracks. How could I come up with a question that they hadn't already answered a dozen times or more?

Plan B. *Whether or not you believe there is an "OSR", there are a lot of interesting people doing a lot of interesting stuff in the space that seems to have been occupied by the OSR. There are publishers leveraging technology that didn't exist when our game of choice was first published, and putting out some really interesting stuff. There are game designers that have put new spins on old games. There are technologically savvy people that have created spaces for gamers to come together and create communities. There are personalities reaching out to help veteran and retired players rekindle the love of the game, or attract new players.*

I want to know what some of these people are thinking, what processes and approaches they use to tackle a "design" problem, or how they work to create or instill a community culture on a forum. Some or all of this group will be ensuring there is a next generation of OSR gamers. They're doing it for the love of the game, investing hundreds (thousands?) of hours in the endeavours. And there are a lot of them, toiling away quietly (or not so quietly). I have no idea how I'll ever find all of them, but this is a start and hopefully this is an opportunity to help everyone to get to know something new about some interesting people.

We're starting off with Bill Barsh, the driving force behind Pacesetter Games & Simulations. *Why Bill? There are lots of other OSR publishers. Honestly, I found his* Cataclysm Kickstarter *interesting (I have mixed opinions on Kickstarters, but that's something best discussed elsewhere) and the* Red Queen *adventure arc concept fascinated me. Also having bought some* PG&S *publications in the past, I hoped he'd recognize my e-mail address and hear me out, instead of just hitting "delete". Bill was quite gracious, almost eager, and he took the time to candidly answer our questions. Now, onto the interview!*

AH: It seems generally accepted that the way to make a small fortune in OSR publishing is to start with a large one. Given that, what motivated you to get into the role of publisher and keep it up for so long?

BB: I am probably not too different than most of old-schoolers. I grew up playing these games in the late '70s and that formed my gaming life. I patterned many of my early adventures on the modules produced by TSR – those modules were

my guide, if you will. Many of the adventures you see today were originally designed in the '80s! Some are new, but many have very old roots.

My formal degree is in journalism (focus on design) so I learned how to create publications. Then I promptly went into the construction business. I always wanted to get into game publishing, but I just never really had the opportunity to move on it. Real life just took precedence. But with technology and the internet, everything changed. Publishing is my way of connecting to the hobby I grew up with. It also provides me the opportunity to bring something to the table and maybe, just maybe, bring some other people into our old school obsession.

Most importantly, it is fun. Yes, it is a ton of work. But I really enjoy it.

AH: Can you describe your adventure design philosophy and process?

BB: Every adventure has to contain a story. The story has to provide a central idea which typically forms the adventure goal (as it relates to the PCs). Of course, the PCs will always be the fly in the ointment. Their participation will alter the story – and it should! But the module has to be designed based on the assumption that the PCs are not part of the story at the beginning; therefore, the villains have their plans and things are set in motion. (Many people think the term "Railroad" is synonymous with published adventures. I think that idea is ridiculous [unless you are referring to the train wreck that is DragonLance]). I always want to include encounters that have absolutely nothing to do with the mission. A sense of the unknown is important in any adventure. I also make sure every adventure is difficult, or there is an atmosphere of danger. Never knowing what lies beyond the next door is what makes this game great.

I also like to set my adventures in environments or locations that are not so common to predesigned adventures. Every adventure should provide some sort of mystery and suspense. That can come from the story but it can also come from the adventure location. Adventures need a twist – a unique or surprising location can do that.

As far as production, I do start with a story and characters. Something is happening and someone is involved. Then I start drawing maps. For me, maps are the adventure flow chart. When my rough maps are done, I work on the time line – what the NPCs and villains are doing while the PCs are tossing their monkey wrenches around. Then the maps get refined and I start filling in the encounter areas. When that is all done, I drop in some encounters that have absolutely nothing to do with the story line. If the players occasionally stare at the DM and wonder "what the hell just happened," you have done something right.

AH: Pacesetter bills itself as innovative. Your solo adventures seem to fit this mold. What design challenges did you face with these modules as compared to standard modules?

BB: Solo modules are a different animal. In general, I draw up the adventure like I would any other. Of course, it has to be balanced to fit a single PC. Unlike, a standard module, a solo module is much more compartmentalized. Each encounter has to be dissected into options for the player. The encounters are structured to feed the player with a little bit of information at a time to build the entire story. Solo adventures are greatly limited by their very nature, but with some work, they can be very rewarding.

The largest hurdle for me was mapping. D&D is nothing without maps. So I came up with sectional maps. With each encounter the map is expanded. Therefore, the player can map as he progresses through the adventure. When done, a complete map lies before him. This also has the benefit of letting the player move forward and backward through the adventure. He can go back and explore areas he may have passed, etc.

The current solo series (I modules) also carry a story line from module to module. There will be seven adventures in total and the entire set of modules form a continuing saga of adventure. Of course, they can be played separately, but in all, they form a sort of mini-campaign. So, while the solo dungeon is not exactly innovative, I think my mapping system and the idea of continuing saga is something new.

AH: Many of your adventures have been published for more than one game system. Do you find that a specific design or adventure philosophy is a better fit for these multi-platform adventures?

BB: I have done some Swords & Wizardry conversions. This will not be done very often. Some of the early adventures, notably RC1, RC2 and RC3 were originally designed for the old B/X system. They were eventually converted to AD&D and renumbered T1, Q1 and Q2, respectively. I think these systems are so similar that conversion had little to no effect on the actual adventure, but you can probably see rule system roots in each. Generally speaking, I design everything in the scope of AD&D. If I feel an adventure would be a good fit for S&W, I will do the conversion. But honestly, this is pretty rare … besides, I am busy enough!

AH: Why did you choose to stay away from POD and pdf sales? Doesn't the handling of printed materials consume a huge amount of effort?

BB: I created Pacesetter because I wanted to create products, not just adventures. Pacesetter is a publishing company. For me, there is nothing like holding a real book. I stay away from POD because I believe in my products; enough so, that I will pay to have them printed in complete print runs. I guess I hope that people will see that Pacesetter is not here to just to make a buck. I guess I also want to be "out there" just like the companies of days gone by. There is nothing wrong with a "publisher" operating a POD and/or PDF product line. It makes great business sense. However, it just is not what I want to do.

AH: What was your experience with Kickstarter?

BB: It is hard for me to really answer this question as my project is not complete. It is running late, which is disappointing. I have to say that I think KS is a solid platform for game and game supplement production. Without KS there would never have been a **Cataclysm at the Acaeum** collaborative product. I had the idea to do the collaborative boxed set for years, but the logistics of doing it were daunting, in the least. Then came KS and it all changed. So for me, I am very positive on KS. Simply, KS gave me the ability to do something that has never been done before (hey, there is that Pacesetter innovation thing again!).

I have two more KS projects in the works, but I will not launch the next one until the Cataclysm is delivered.

AH: Do you find that attending cons helps you in adventure design, business?

BB: I am not sure I ever really thought of it that way, but I am sure it does. There is nothing like meeting customers, supporters, and other designers in person. I always appreciate feedback, good and bad. I also think it is very important for people to meet in person. What is more revealing is learning which adventures people like best. I guess that leads into your next question.

I did not create Pacesetter to make money. Now, I don't want to lose money, either. So, I do have to look at it as a business from time to time. Going to conventions helps the business end out. But maybe

not in the way most people would think. Conventions allow me, Bill Barsh, to get out and meet the public. The internet, for all its power, is really impersonal. Hell, almost everyone uses a pseudo name in place of their own name. I understand that, but it still impersonal. People can form opinions about me or Pacesetter without ever having met me. It only takes one guy with an axe to grind to paint someone quite negatively. That is the internet. But when I go to conventions I make a point of saying hello to everyone I can and I try to be very available. In business, you are going to make mistakes. The internet can magnify them to ridiculous levels. Meeting people in real life brings all that back down to earth. So for me, the interaction with customers, supporters, doubters, etc., is very important.

AH: What is your bestselling/most popular publication? What is the favorite non-Pacesetter adventure?

BB: Number one seller since day one is *T1 The Thing in the Valley*. Outside of new releases, T1 out sells every other adventure on an annual basis. To this date, T1 has sold more than 400 copies (and I don't sell through a distributor). It has been that way for four years now. The solo modules are a close second.

My favorite contemporary adventure (outside Pacesetter) is *Spire of Iron and Crystal* by Matt Finch. There are some other fantastic OSR adventures out there, but Spire has that classic vibe and it really is fun (I am big on fun).

AH: What is your favorite character class to play?

BB: Magic-User. I just enjoy the challenge of trying to stay alive at low levels.

AH: You brought the Wee Warriors publications "back". How has this been received? What changes did you make to these materials? Why did you seize this opportunity?

BB: First, I want to make sure we recognize that the rebirth of the old Wee Warriors modules would not have been possible without the efforts of Doug Rhea of the North Texas RPG Con. Doug contacted Peter Kerestan (who wrote all those classic adventures) and things moved forward from there.

I have not had a single complaint about the reproduction of the classic adventures (*Palace of the Vampire Queen*, *The Dwarven Glory*, and *The Misty Isles*). In fact, I have a bunch of emails from people who were just thrilled that the books were available again.

With all three books, I included all, or nearly all, the original contents as they were originally presented. PotVQ and DG are presented as originally produced while MI had the maps redrawn (the originals were somewhat confusing). With PotVQ and DG, I included an AD&D conversion with some modification to make the adventures "flow" more like a standard adventure – consistency of encounters being the most important change. The Misty Isle reprint has no conversion at this point. However, each of the nine islands will be thoroughly converted for use with AD&D.

When Doug came to me with the idea of doing a full size *PotVQ*, I was absolutely excited. The Vampire Queen is special and working on the project is the highlight of the past couple years. But my job is not done as there is much more to come.

I might as well take this opportunity to break some news. This year, Pacesetter produced the second Pacesetter printing of *Palace of the Vampire Queen*. The total print run is 200 copies (with the majority already sold). The next printing will NOT include the original contents; it is time for the Queen to return to her crypt (for the time being). The upcoming third print will feature the AD&D conversion, but significantly expanded with all new maps from my cartographer. The lead-in to the new *PotVQ* is the recently released *PotVQ: Castle Blood*. Of course, there is much more. The *Misty Isles* and *Dwarven Glory* will also see expansion (massive expansion for *Misty Isles*). The Wee Warriors products are fantastic and deserve some serious attention. Time will tell whether people like what I am trying to do with them.

AH: What do you think it will take to keep the OSR vibrant for another 10 years? 20?

BB: Find some new fans. The OSR has to attract new fans or it will simply fade away as we all grow older and fade away ourselves. It almost happened once and it could happen for real the next time. I don't think it will go away anytime soon. OSR conventions are on the rise, which is great news. I see more and more new faces, and younger faces, which is also encouraging. I think we are safe for the next 10 years and probably more. Hell, I plan on kicking around for the duration.

What has to go away is the antipathy of some people on some forums. I don't care that some people have OSR angst. But enough is enough. At some point, it would be nice if those who constantly beat the negative drum actually do the right thing and shut the hell up. In the end, we all enjoy gaming. Who really cares if you are playing AD&D or OSRIC? The point is that we are playing and having fun.

AH: Your Red Queen modules are an adventure arc that spans several different gaming systems & genres. What motivated this? Any specific design challenges? Why did you omit Star Frontiers?

BB: Innovation! Yes, there is that word again. I don't think it had ever been done. But before I go further, I will go into a brief history. I volunteered to produce some digest modules for the 2013 North Texas RPG Convention (Every old school enthusiast needs to attend this convention). But I could not restrain myself and I volunteered to do four digests. I came up with the idea to link them…and while I was at it, why not span some TSR's greatest RPGs. After all, these games are all played at the NTX.

So after I volunteered, I sat at my desk and wondered what the hell I had just done. I knew what I wanted to do, but I didn't have an adventure in mind. I borrowed the Red Queen concept from a future Pacesetter product. That product has nothing to do with AD&D (or the other game systems). I originally thought the RQ series would be a nightmare, but it really came together without too many challenges. The fact that they are digest adventures certainly helped the cause.

I skipped Star Frontiers for several reasons. First, I never played it. Second, getting four digests done (on top of several other modules) for the NTX convention was going to kill me already. Third, I want to stay away from the genre as it will be addressed in a future Pacesetter product.

AH: Is there any question we should have asked but didn't and that you are dying to answer?

BB: I think you need to put a stop to my answers! The one thing I might add is a little background on Pacesetter Game & Simulations and Bill Barsh.

I would like people to know that Bill Barsh works as a Construction Project Manager, is married to a wonderful woman and has three teenage kids. All three play high level travel sports which keeps both me and my better half extremely busy. Until last year, I coached football, baseball and assisted with my daughters' softball teams. So when do I have time for Pacesetter? When I can. Yes, I get behind and I get swamped. But I do love it and my family is very supportive. I am not alone, as I know many OSR publishers operate in the same environment, and we do it because we truly love our hobby.

Lastly, I have been asked on a few occasions, How come "Pacesetter Games" [& Simulations]? Were you part of the original Pacesetter? I will answer that last question first. No, I have absolutely no connection with the original Pacesetter other than I was a huge fan. I met some of the gang back in the day. I used to do some work for Task Force Games so I had the opportunity to meet some real game designers while attending Gen Con and Origins. I always loved the way the original Pacesetter did things. When I created my Pacesetter, it was homage to a truly great company. There was, and is, no attempt to capitalize on the original company's name. I have consistently said this very same thing. That said, I ran into Steve Sullivan – one of the original Pacesetter gang – and we are talking…this going to be some fun!

The Pacesetter thing came up recently at a large rpg forum and went on for three pages before I was

alerted. The topic was something along the lines of "Who the $&#* does this guy think he is?" I jumped in and the fire went away pretty fast after I explained what Pacesetter is and where it came from – and that I had been around for four years! But you know how out of control the internet can be. What was astounding to me was a post by another game company owner who knows all about Pacesetter, but felt the need to back-handedly add fuel to the fire. It is great business, ain't it!)

Thanks again for this opportunity and I appreciate the latitude in getting it done!

Bill Barsh

Post-script: *Hopefully you find this column interesting, I've got a few other interview candidates (victims?) in mind for the next few interviews. We'll see if they agree or not. If you have suggestions or strong feelings about this column, please let me know. Meanwhile, please check out the PG&S website at* http://www.pacesettergames.com/

I don't think you'll be disappointed.

Smoke Blade*

by Ian Slater

This +1 sword is made of a dark, grey metal that does not reflect light. When within 20' of a fire source at least as large as a torch (a candle is too small) the blade can shape and redirect the smoke anywhere in a 30' radius, obscuring vision for all in the area of effect but the wielder. All creatures are -4 to hit.

Alternatively, the wielder can direct the smoke towards a single victim and that victim must save versus rod/staff/wand, or cough and choke for 1d3 rounds. The wielder may not attack while directing smoke using the sword.

Sword type (1d6): 1-3 short, 4-5 broad, 6 long.

GP value 8,000; XP value 1,000

Dragonsbanes Blades

From the Lexicon of Kraat,

written by Indane Kraat, the legendary centaur forger:

First prepare the blade using only the finest gold and silver, purified to a thousand fine, blended with the best steel you can acquire, which must also be free of any impurities.

The blade must be folded no less than a hundred times, each time being cooled in the blood of a dragon. In the last folding introduce at least a score of dragon scales for a broadsword and at least ten for a dagger, with appropriate amounts for blades of other sizes in proportion.

The blade must be tempered in the blood of a different type of dragon. This prepares the blade for the spells and now the forger can have a wizard cast the enchanting spells required to make the blade a magical one. During this process the blade must be sprinkled with ground teeth, at least five, from another type of dragon.

Only improvements to quality may be cast into the blade – no other magics are to be placed on the blade. Upon finishing the enchantment the blade must be used in the death of another dragon within a year's time, and only then will the blade be the bane of life for all dragonkind.

Note that making the grip wrapping of wyvern hide, or that of another type of wyrm, will serve to improve the chances of the blade gaining the power to doom all dragonkind. Do not under any circumstances use the blade to cause harm to any type of unlife until after it has tasted dragon blood, lest it lose its special powers against all wyrms.

Creature Feature I: Australian Monsters

by Dan Rasaiah

A collection of monsters that are a novel addition to most campaigns.

Giant Tasmanian Devil

(Sarcophilus Harrisii Gargantus)

Frequency:	Rare
No. App.:	1 or 1d4
Size:	M
Move:	12"
Armour Class:	7
Hit Dice:	3+3
Attacks:	3
Damage:	1d3/1d3/1d12
Special Attacks:	Bite Crush
Special Defences:	Nil
Magic Resistance:	Standard
Lair Probability:	Nil
Intelligence:	Animal
Alignment:	Neutral
Treasure:	Nil
Level/XP:	85 + 4/hp

This black bear sized variant is in all other ways indistinct from a regular Tasmanian Devil. It has the classic black fur with white underbelly and chest markings, and vicious canine teeth. Once this creature has taken a hold of its prey (successful saving throw vs petrification avoids), its powerful jaws will continue to deliver their bone crushing force until the victim is dead, the victim makes a successful bend bars/lift gates roll (in lieu of attacking that round) or the Giant Tasmanian Devil is reduced to ¼ its total hit points. On the second and subsequent rounds, this bite crush inflicts 3d6 automatic damage (e.g., 1d12 on initial bite, followed by 3d6 on 2nd round if saving throw is failed, followed by 3d6 per round thereafter).

These carnivorous marsupials are nocturnal, and can be found in woodland areas. They are not above scavenging and will be attracted to any carrion no matter the state of decomposition. They have even been known to exhume cadavers in some cases, raising suspicions in some native cultures that they are literally 'devils' in animal form.

They have limited climbing ability, and can scale large enough trees to a height of approximately 30' if required.

They are solitary creatures once weaned.

Giant Wombat

(Diprotodon)

Frequency:	Rare
No. App.:	2d12
Size:	L
Move:	12"
Armour Class:	6
Hit Dice:	9
Attacks:	1 Or 2
Damage:	2d4, 2d6 x2
Special Attacks:	Charge, Trample
Special Defences:	Nil
Magic Resistance:	Standard
Lair Probability:	Nil
Intelligence:	Animal
Alignment:	Neutral
Treasure:	Nil
Level/XP:	IX / 1,200 + 12/hp

This giant herbivorous marsupial resembles a hornless rhino covered in short brown fur. A typical male stands 7 feet high at the shoulder and 12 feet long from nose to tail, with large specimens weighing over 6000lbs. It has strong claws (for digging up roots) and its feet are turned inwards, giving a pigeon toed appearance.

Giant wombats attack by charging, doing double damage on a successful hit (4d4 hp damage). Any opponent on the ground or low to the ground will be trampled for 2d6 damage for each successful foreleg attack on subsequent rounds.

Living in small herds, these browsing animals can be found in woodland and grassland areas, where they graze on shrubs and all types of grass.

The pouch on female Giant Wombats opens to the rear, and there is a 10% chance that an encountered female will be carrying a juvenile.

Goanna Megalania

Frequency:	Rare
No. App.:	1d2
Size:	L (30')
Move:	12"
Armour Class:	5
Hit Dice:	7+2
Attacks:	3
Damage:	1d8/1d8/2d8
Special Attacks:	Poison
Special Defences:	Immune To Poison
Magic Resistance:	Standard
Lair Probability:	Nil
Intelligence:	Non
Alignment:	Neutral
Treasure:	Nil
Level/XP:	525 +8/hp

These gargantuan terrestrial lizards, are ancient relatives of the smaller monitor lizard. Large specimens can weigh upwards of 4,500 lbs and grow to 30 feet in length. Despite their ponderous bulk, they are able to run in bursts (up to 1 round per turn) at triple their normal movement rate.

They are carnivorous creatures, and will attack with slashing fore-claws and bite. Their toxin secreting oral glands mean that any creature bitten must save vs. poison or die in 1d6 rounds. Their poison sacs, if removed, retain efficacy for 1d2 days before becoming useless. Goanna Megalania themselves, are immune to all natural occurring poisons, and as such, parts of their anatomy are highly prized by alchemists and wizards alike.

They are transient creatures, and combine predation with scavenging. Due to their size, they prefer to prey on large land mammals, but will be attracted to the scent of rotting meat, no matter how advanced the decomposition.

Goanna Megalania can be found in all land environments, with different varieties having adapted to coastal swampland, woodlands, plains, and arid zones.

Marsupial Lion

Frequency:	Rare
No. App.:	1d2
Size:	M-L
Move:	9"
Armour Class:	6
Hit Dice:	3+4
Attacks:	3
Damage:	1d3/1d3/1d10
Special Attacks:	Surprise, Grapple
Special Defences:	Surprised 1 in 6
Magic Resistance:	Standard
Lair Probability:	20%
Intelligence:	Animal
Alignment:	Neutral
Treasure:	Nil
Level/XP:	135 +4/hp

These large meat eating marsupials average 3 feet high at the shoulder and five feet long and can weigh up to 400lbs. They are a tawny straw colour, with dark stripes across their back and tail.

Marsupial lions are very solid animals, with extremely powerful jaws and strong forelimbs. They have retractable claws, and are able to stabilize themselves on their tail, allowing their front limbs to slash and grapple opponents (if both claws hit, the bite attack automatically hits). They have enlarged semi-opposable thumbs which makes them able climbers (as well as aiding their

grappling) and they are as comfortable in the trees as leopards.

Marsupial lions are not particularly fast runners, and as such prefer to ambush their prey by dropping from overhanging tree branches or sneaking up and leaping on unwary victims. This sneaking ability means they surprise opponents 1-4 in 6 times. Once they have slain their prey, they will often drag the carcass up a nearby tree to feast in relative safety.

Their acute senses (sight, smell and hearing), mean they themselves are rarely surprised (1 in 6).

Marsupial lions can be found in semi-arid open scrubland and woodland areas.

There is a 10% chance that when encountered they will have 1d4 young with them.

Red Kangaroo

Frequency:	Uncommon
No. App.:	1d3+1 (90%) 10d100 (10%)
Size:	M
Move:	15"
Armour Class:	7
Hit Dice:	1d2
Attacks:	1
Damage:	1d4 Or 2d4
Special Attacks:	Nil
Special Defences:	Nil
Magic Resistance:	Standard
Lair Probability:	Nil
Intelligence:	Animal
Alignment:	Neutral
Treasure:	Nil
Level/XP:	I / 10+1/hp
	II / 20+2/hp

This species is a very large marsupial with long, pointed ears and a square muzzle. They have two forelimbs with small claws, two muscular hind-limbs, which are used for jumping (up to 40' in one leap) and a strong tail which is often used to create a tripod when standing upright. They also stabilize themselves on this tail when fighting, delivering powerful double-footed raking kicks which can disembowel a man.

Males average 5' tall when standing upright, and have short, red-brown fur, becoming paler on their chest and limbs. Large varieties can be as tall as 7' (2HD, kick for 2d4 hp damage) and weigh over 300lbs. Females are smaller than males and are blue-grey with a brown tinge, with pale grey fur on their chest and arms.

Due to the position of their eyes, kangaroos have approximately 300 degree field of vision. This (combined with their acute sense of hearing) means they are rarely surprised.

These creatures are herbivores, favoring grasses and small shrubs. They typically graze in the one area, unless driven away through environmental considerations.

They are crepuscular animals (active primarily during twilight) and whilst usually found in small family groups, will sometimes graze in enormous herds that can number over 1000.

Razorback

Frequency:	Uncommon
No. App.:	2d4
Size:	L
Move:	12"
Armour Class:	5
Hit Dice:	5-7
Attacks:	2
Damage:	3d6 (Gore) 1d6 (Bite)

Special Attacks:	Disease
Special Defences:	Nil
Magic Resistance:	Standard
Lair Probability:	Nil
Intelligence:	Low
Alignment:	Neutral Evil
Treasure:	Nil
Level/XP:	V / 165 +5/hp
	VI / 275 +6/hp
	VII / 400 +8/hp

This species of evil giant wild boar, is characterized by large head and body covered with stiff bristles (and often a thick layer of mud) and relatively short legs. Their body is insulated with a thick layer of surface fat, which combined with their tough exterior, combines to be as effective as metal armour. They are vicious creatures and whilst being omnivorous, favor meat above all other foods. They will attack humanoids on sight, and often use basic group tactics to draw stronger defenders away from the small and weak, whom they will snatch away to be devoured at their leisure.

Adult males (standing 5' at the shoulder) develop tusks that protrude from the mouth, from their upper and lower teeth. These serve as weapons and foraging tools. The upper tusks are bent upwards in males, and are regularly ground against the lower ones to produce sharp edges. Tusks can measure over a foot long in large specimens, with the average about half that. Females also have sharp canines, but they are smaller, and rarely protrude from the jaw like the males' tusks.

Razorbacks attack by goring and biting their prey. They are filthy creatures, and their putrescent maws are likely to cause a random disease (50% chance) with any successful bite attack.

There is a 5% chance that groups of 20-40 razorbacks will be encountered. In groups of this size, there will be a monstrous Alpha male (8HD, gore 4d6 hp, bite 1d10 hp, special charge attack) as large as a small elephant. These tusks of these rare creatures can grow several feet long and are prized by collectors.

Short Faced Kangaroo

(Procoptodon)

Frequency:	Rare
No. App.:	1d100
Size:	M-L
Move:	18"
Armour Class:	7
Hit Dice:	3-4
Attacks:	1
Damage:	3d4
Special Attacks:	Knock Prone
Special Defences:	Nil
Magic Resistance:	Standard
Lair Probability:	Nil
Intelligence:	Animal
Alignment:	Neutral
Treasure:	Nil
Level/XP:	III / 50 + 3/hp
	IV / 85 + 4/hp:

The prehistoric ancestor of the regular kangaroo, short faced kangaroos grow between 7 and 10 feet tall and weigh 500-1000lbs. As the name suggests they have a flat face and forward-pointing eyes. On each foot they have a single large toe similar in appearance to a horse's hoof, whilst on their front paws they have two elongated claws used to pull down overhanging branches in order to eat the leaves.

The Short faced kangaroo can jump up to 60' in one leap, and can easily outpace a man. If facing danger, they will run rather than fight. If backed into a corner, the Short Faced Kangaroo defends itself by stabilizing on its tail and delivering a powerful double-foot push kick. Any M or S sized creature struck by such a kick, must save vs. petrification or be knocked prone from the force of the blow.

Short faced kangaroos are herbivores, and can be found in any grassland, woodland or semi-arid prehistoric setting.

Titanoboa

Frequency:	Rare
No. App.:	1d2
Size:	L (50' Long)
Move:	24"

Armour Class:	5
Hit Dice:	12 + 2
Attacks:	2
Damage:	3d4, 4d6
Special Attacks:	Constriction
Special Defences:	Nil
Magic Resistance:	Standard
Lair Probability:	Nil
Intelligence:	Animal
Alignment:	Neutral
Treasure:	Nil
Level/XP:	3,700 + 16/hp

This gargantuan snake (3' diameter, 50' long, 2500lbs), attacks by biting and constricting its prey. On any natural roll of 20 for its bite attack, M sized or smaller creatures will be swallowed whole, and will die in 6 rounds unless they can cut themselves free (interior of snake AC10, all attacks inflict -2 damage per die). Swallowed creatures take automatic 3d4 damage per round until they either die, or cut themselves free.

M or smaller sized creatures caught in its coils, have no chance of breaking free aside from reducing the snake to less than 1/3 of its original hit points. For each round constricted, caught creatures suffer 1d6 increased damage (e.g., 4d6 the first round, 5d6 the second round, 6d6 the third round, to a maximum of 10d6 on the 7th and every round thereafter). All armour and equipment carried must also make saving throws (against crush) for each round the victim is constricted.

It is a terrestrial creature, although sages speculate that larger marine varieties may exist.

Irukandji Jellyfish

Frequency:	Rare
No. App.:	10d100
Size:	S
Move:	1" Swimming
Armour Class:	10
Hit Dice:	<1
Attacks:	1
Damage:	Special
Special Attacks:	Poison
Special Defences:	Transparent
Magic Resistance:	Standard
Lair Probability:	Nil
Intelligence:	Non
Alignment:	Neutral
Treasure:	Nil
Level/XP:	Varies

These tiny, inch long invertebrates, are characterized by a translucent bell-shaped sac with tentacles dragging beneath it. They are typically found in saltwater coastal areas, and group together in swarms which fill a 30'-300' square area.

Their tentacles contain a deadly venom, which when imparted, cause the victim to die, or even go insane from the agony caused by the toxin. An immediate save vs poison will be required, failure resulting in death. A successful save vs poison still incurs 1d4 hp damage per hour for 6d8 hours, unless a neutralize poison spell is used on the victim.

A second saving throw versus poison (determining insanity) will need to be made 1d4 days after the initial stinging, as the unspeakable wracking pain of the venom often drives victims to madness. This saving throw will not be required if a neutralize poison spell has already been used on the victim.

The translucent nature of these creatures makes them incredibly difficult to spot, and they will surprise 90% of the time.

Rat Worm

Frequency:	Common
No. App.:	4d6
Size:	M
Move:	12"// 6"
Armour Class:	7
Hit Dice:	1+1
Attacks:	1
Damage:	1d6
Special Attacks:	10% Chance Of Disease
Special Defences:	Nil
Magic Resistance:	Standard
Lair Probability:	10%
Intelligence:	Semi
Alignment:	Neutral Evil
Level/XP:	28 + 2/hp

These abominations appear like a furred snake with a giant rat head, e.g., like an elongated giant rat without legs.

Their burrows honeycomb graveyards, sewers, and other decrepit places of the world. Any creature bitten by a rat worm has a 10% chance per wound inflicted of contracting a serious disease. If such infection is indicated the victim is diseased unless a saving throw versus poison is successful.

Rat worms are fearful of fire and flee from it, but are able swimmers and can attack in water as well as land.

Rat Worm (Giant)

Frequency:	Uncommon
No. App.:	1d8
Size:	L
Move:	15"// 6"
Armour Class:	5
Hit Dice:	4+2
Attacks:	1
Damage:	2d4
Special Attacks:	50% Chance Of Disease
Special Defences:	Nil
Magic Resistance:	Standard
Lair Probability:	10%
Intelligence:	Semi
Alignment:	Neutral Evil
Level/XP:	155 + 4/hp

Identical in all respects to regular rat worms save size, their vicious bite has a 50% chance of causing a serious disease (successful saving throw vs poison negates).

River Shark

Frequency:	Rare
No. App.:	1
Size:	L (21'long)
Move:	24"
Armour Class:	7
Hit Dice:	7
Attacks:	1
Damage:	4d4
Special Attacks:	Surprise
Special Defences:	Camouflage
Magic Resistance:	Nil
Lair Probability:	Nil
Intelligence:	Non
Alignment:	Neutral
Level/XP:	1,000 + 10/hp

This fresh water predator is believed by some sages to be a variety of pre-historic giant catfish. Growing up to 21' long, and dark brown/black in colour, they are frightful beasts, with huge toothy maws and long sprouting whiskers crowning their slimy heads. They are ambush predators, and typically dwell in muddied river-bottoms, where their coloration renders them almost invisible (surprise 1-5 in 6). Their flattened profile (similar to a flathead fish) also enables them to settle into shallow mud flats just off the water's edge (3' deep water or greater), where they will explosively attack animals coming to drink.

Once they have latched onto their prey, they will submerge similar to a crocodile and look to drown them before retiring to the muddy bottom to feed (requires a successful BBLG roll to escape, otherwise regular drowning rules apply.

Whilst they don't keep 'lairs', they are territorial beasts, and so it is common to find the belongings, bones, and treasures of many past victims strewn across the river bottom in their vicinity.

Giant Kangaroo

Frequency:	Very Rare
No. App.:	2d4
Size:	L
Move:	24"
Armour Class:	5
Hit Dice:	6
Attacks:	2 or 1
Damage:	1d6/1d6 or 5d4

Special Attacks: Stunning
Special Defences: Nil
Magic Resistance: Nil
Lair Probability: Nil
Intelligence: Non
Alignment: Neutral
Level/XP: 350 + 6/hp

Towering 14' tall, these gigantic marsupials resemble their smaller cousins in all regards save size. Whether they are the product of a mad wizard's experimenting or a prehistoric ancestor of the regular kangaroo remains to be proven.

Bizarrely, when attacked they have the tendency to box with their opponent, able to deliver vicious blows with left and right 'fist'. They will intersperse this strange attack method with a vicious double front push-kick, which will propel M or smaller adversaries a great distance (causing 5d4hp damage and stunning them for 2d6 rounds save for half). L sized creatures will sustain the same damage and will be knocked prone unless they successfully save versus petrification.

The giant kangaroo can jump up to 120' horizontally in one leap, and can easily outpace a man. They are herbivores, and can be found in any grassland, woodland or semi-arid setting.

Whilst shy of humanoids, they can occasionally be coaxed by druids and other woodland folk to serve as steeds, although without a harness of some kind, riders will be unable to remain mounted during the beasts' considerable leaping.

As we did in Issue 5, all the magic swords strewn through this issue are thief swords from the mind of Ian Slater. Note that the swords marked with a star (*) are usable only by thieves, while the others can be used by fighters and classes able to use that type of sword.

Sword of Reverberation

A **Sword of Reverberation** is a +1 magical weapon. Whenever desired a wielder may give up their attack and choose to parry. To parry, the wielder's strength to hit bonus OR reaction attacking adjustment (higher of the two, not both) and the sword's magical bonus are deducted from the opponents' to hit roll, and the wielder's AC is improved by 2 points.*

If the parry is successful the incoming attack is blocked, and the sword emits a loud clanging noise that causes all victims in a 3" radius but the wielder to save versus spell or be deafened for 2d4 rounds. This inflicts -1 to-hit, -1 damage, unable to hear approaching thieves, and any other applicable side effect.

Note that 1% of these blades are cursed and upon the 7th successful parry the sword will shatter with a gigantic explosive noise, causing all in a 4" radius to save versus spell, those who succeed are deafened for 1d4 turns, those who fail are deafened permanently.

* The DM should use whatever parrying mechanic for their campaign.

Sword type (1d6): 1-2 short, 3-4 broad, 5-6 long. GP value 6,000; XP value 1,500

Sword of Eloquence *

This +2 weapon, in the hands of a thief, allows the wilder to temporarily be more convincing in order to talk their way out of unfortunate circumstances. This translates into a temporary 5 point increase in charisma, to a maximum of 18. This increase lasts for 1 turn, plus 1 round for every point that the wielder's charisma would have been raised beyond 18. So for example, a wielder with a 16 charisma using the sword of eloquence would have their charisma raised to 18 for 1 turn + 3 rounds. This power may be used 3 times per day.

Sword type (1d6): 1-3 short, 4-5 broad, 6 long. GP value 5,000; XP value 1,000

Creature Feature II: Ecology of the Gree-Kin

by Bryan Fazekas

Zombies are not the only monster that wants to eat your brains!

"Hal, did you ever fight a gree-kin?" asked the boy, his eyes shining with excitement.

"Gree-kins? Huge monsters that suck your brains out your nose?" The old duffer quaffed half his ale, dribbling some down his chest. He snorted in disgust, spraying ale from his mustache in a 3 foot arc. "There's no such thing. It's just a fairy tale." With that he sucked down the remainder of his ale.

David's eyes dimmed with disappointment and chagrin. Boys his age were easily excited and just as easily discouraged. He turned his crestfallen gaze to his best friend Jake.

Jake sniggered with contempt as only an 11 year old can, dismissing the old man. "He doesn't know anything. Gree-kins are real. Besides, most of his stories are cow manure."

The old man swatted at the defiant boy but came nowhere near close. Both boys fled out the door, laughing. Seeing there was no story the few others in the tavern wandered out behind the boys, onto other business. With his audience gone, and more importantly no more free ale, Hal grumbled unintelligibly for a bit then started his afternoon nap.

It was late afternoon. Trajan watched as Hal swiped at the boy and then as the few travelers left the tavern. Trajan mused that Hal had stayed awake longer than usual. "*He must be getting old if he didn't make up a story to cadge more ale from those travelers. Can't be that he's too drunk.*" Hal emitted a snore that rattled the windows. "*Maybe he is that drunk.*"

Walking out of the common room of the inn/tavern, Trajan found the boys sitting outside, going back and forth about gree-kins. Sitting down between them Trajan cut off their arguing. "So you want to know about gree-kins?"

Volatile as children are, both boys dropped their argument and rounded on the old man with excited questions. It took him a minute to quiet them down so he could get a word in.

"Gree-kins are not a fairy tale. They are VERY real. My best friend Etjar and I met some while traveling with an exiled wizard and a small group of pilgrims who were coming up from Sathea to Kerr. We ran into the pilgrims and the wizard north of Sathea and we all agreed we'd travel together for safety. Their safety. The weather was good and the traveling was easy. Too easy ..."

* * *

Trajan and Etjar strode the dirt road, their long strides eating up the distance. Both were big men, well over 6 feet in height, young and powerful. Anyone observing would realize these two could travel from Sathea to Kerr in a far shorter time than their companions bringing up the rear. Periodically the pair stopped to wait for them to catch up.

The dirt road meandered through the lightly forested hills, although it was more straight than not. Sometimes the forest grew dense but it was mostly scattered clumps no closer than 40 feet from the road. Later the forest road would grow claustrophobic amongst dense trees, but here it was bright and open. It was the trade route between Sathea and Kerr and both the Empire and the City cooperated to keep the brush from encroaching on the road, which reduced the frequency and success of ambushes.

In contrast to the Kerreans, the Sathean pilgrims were easily a foot shorter, their swarthy features another contrast to the fair Kerreans. Although they were fit and healthy men, their shorter strides could not keep up.

Bringing up the far rear of their procession a young Sathean woman in riding clothes struggled along, trying to keep pace. She didn't appear to be used to walking, her clothes more suited to horses, and her

limp demonstrated her feet were unused to this effort. Over her brown riding clothes she wore a dark green vest that was covered with many pockets. Clothes too heavy for the weather and a weighty backpack made her struggle worse.

As she shambled up to the resting group the young woman, whose plain face was coated in road dust, grimaced when the others made to resume walking. "Wait," she snarled. "I need a rest, too!"

Trajan had little patience and nothing resembling tact. "If you walked faster you'd get more rest!"

"If you walked slower I wouldn't need to!" These two rubbed each other the wrong way from the first moment they met. Etjar tried to jolly her up, but she snapped at him as well. She glared at everyone as she sat down, pulling her canteen from her pack to clear the dust from her throat. None of the men moved until she got up 20 minutes later. Trajan would bait her and argue, but even he had enough sense to not invoke her ire more than he had.

This scene repeated itself during the long day, making the long day even longer. Trajan's attitude towards the woman didn't make things easier.

As the sun edged toward the horizon Trajan and Etjar started looking for a defensible site for a camp. The sun was still barely above the trees when they found a site, a ring of large rocks 60 feet across in the middle of a much larger clearing. Now in their early 20's, they had been training, working, and fighting together for nearly 15 years. They didn't discuss the decision. Both knew this was the spot, dropped their packs, and started preparations for the night.

The leader of the pilgrims, a squat man named Hax, accosted them. "What are you doing? We have another hour of daylight for travel!"

Etjar, always more genial than Trajan, answered promptly before his friend could stick his foot in his mouth. "We need a good, defensible spot for tonight's camp. We may find one farther on, but by the time this one is prepared it will be close enough to dark anyway."

Hax bristled and started to reply but Trajan cut him off. "We are camping here. If you don't like it pick a different one."

Hax looked like he wanted to argue, but his compatriots distracted him and started work to setup the camp. At the soldiers' direction the pilgrims collected brush and made a ring outside the rocks. While this wouldn't stop anything determined to get into the camp, it would slow them down and give some warning. Hax grudgingly assisted the preparations with poor grace.

About the time they were finished the woman, Marissa, trudged up to the camp site and dropped her pack.

"Glad you're here to help," Trajan jibed her.

Etjar appreciated that she was too tired to do more than glare at Trajan. "*This is going to be an interesting trip, even if these two don't kill each other*," thought Etjar. Trajan took charge and organized watches. "We all take 2 hour watches in pairs. Stay awake and pay attention to what is around us."

"Why do we need to keep watch?" growled Marissa and Hax at the same time, turning to glare at each other as much as Trajan.

Etjar cut in, "Because we don't know what's out there and we're all going to live longer if we're warned and awake before something kills us. Would you rather be warned *after* you were killed?"

Trajan laughed and bit back the response he was going to make. "We don't know what is out there. I'd like it to be *nothing*, but we'd best not count on *nothing*." For the easily irritated Kerrean, that could pass for a polite rejoinder.

He paired Hax and Marissa for first watch, figuring the tired woman would be hard to wake later on and feeling the need to punish the thankless Hax by pairing him with her. Etjar and one of the pilgrims had the second watch, two other pairs of pilgrims had the third and fourth, and the last man had watch with himself for the last stretch before dawn. "Anyone who doesn't want to share the responsibility can travel on their own."

Etjar shook his head. Sometimes it seemed like Trajan went out of his way to irritate people.

While everyone grumbled they all, including the woman, wanted the two soldiers with them. Trajan and Etjar were big men, heavily armed and wearing chainmail shirts. Trajan wore a hand-and-a-half bastard sword slung over his shoulder, while Etjar bore a long sword and shield. They carried themselves with confidence and were no doubt experienced in dealing with trouble.

The pilgrims and the woman all carried walking sticks that could maybe double as fighting sticks, but Trajan guessed none had ever had to save their own lives with one. Maybe knock a few heads, especially the woman, but not anything serious.

The pilgrims arranged their bedding together, as did Trajan and Etjar. Marissa set herself up away from both groups, although given her prickly nature it wasn't likely that any of the men would make any moves in her direction.

Trajan was in the middle of an oddly comforting dream which somehow involved Marissa (later he couldn't remember for sure) when a shout woke him. Used to snapping from deep sleep to instant alert, he was on his feet with his sword drawn before he was even aware that he was awake. Nearby Etjar was in the same exact state, sword and shield ready.

An impossibly tall creature, hairlessly naked and looking like an emaciated, dark green giant, had crossed the brush line and had knocked one of the pilgrims to the ground. He grabbed the other guard with hands larger than dinner plates and bit into the man's forehead with a horrible grating of teeth on bone. The five foot tall human looked like a doll in the giant's claws. The Sathean screamed like a mortally wounded rabbit, sharp and piercing. The creature bit again, crunching through skull. The scream shut off as quickly as it began, although the man was definitely not dead. Before he or Etjar could react the giant turned and bound over the brush and out of the light.

Hax and the other sleeping pilgrims had just pulled themselves to their feet, while Trajan noticed that the woman was on her feet, standing ready with her staff in hand. His opinion of her rose two notches.

"What was that?" blurted Hax. "We have to go after them! To save Horrus!"

Trajan started to reply, but Etjar cut him off. "Did you see that thing move? It was running as fast as a horse. No way we could catch it ... and besides, if we did catch it we wouldn't be doing your friend a favor."

"We can save his life!"

"Did you see what it did to him? It bit the top of his head off. If he lived, which isn't likely ..." Etjar spit and looked queasy. "We wouldn't be doing him a favor," he trailed off.

Trajan interjected, "I am NOT chasing that thing into the dark. Your friend had really bad luck and I don't want to share it."

Marissa cut in, "Besides, we don't know how many of them there are. Chasing into the dark is stupid. Especially after someone who is already dead."

Hax turned visibly red in the firelight and made to argue more, when the second guard moaned. His shirt was ripped and six parallel claw marks were visible across his chest. They didn't look deep and hadn't bled a lot, but they looked puffy and his face looked feverish. As they watched he sat down on the ground with a barely controlled thump.

Rushing to him the woman checked his face and his wounds. "Poison," she said, "the claws inject poison." In the light of the camp fire they could see the wounds were already inflamed and puffy. "Nasty stuff." He moaned again. Dashing to her pack she pawed through it, taking what seemed like forever to find a small copper bottle. Before she reached the wounded man he uttered another small moan and released his breath a final time, relaxing into death.

Swearing in a language none of the others recognized, she slid the bottle into a pocket on her vest. "Even if I had been quicker, it would not have mattered. The poison was too virulent, he was already dead." Shuddering lightly she continued, "He didn't have a chance."

"We'll bury him when it gets light." Turning to his pack Trajan strung his bow. "It's a couple of hours until dawn. Get some sleep if you think you can." Hax started to argue but his remaining followers shushed him. It didn't appear they were happy with the turn of events but didn't want to alienate the two soldiers. Hax grumbled more as Etjar strung his bow and lay down with it across his chest, a quiver of arrows close by. Marissa lay back on her pad while the surviving pilgrims formed their clump. Their dark looks at the others showed their dissatisfaction with the general reaction to the attack and deaths of their two fellows, but they said nothing the others could make out.

As the others lay down Trajan sat as far from the fire as possible while still remaining within the circle of rocks, gazing into the darkness with his bow in his hands. He didn't bother to keep awake the pilgrim who was supposed to keep watch with him.

Time passed, maybe an hour, and Trajan felt a change in the night air. Not moving a muscle he listened carefully both with his ears and his mind. Something moved silently in the darkness.

He stood, drew the bow, and fired in one swift motion. The arrow traveled less than 100 feet into the darkness when it impacted something with a meaty thunk. A shocked moment later a shrill scream pierced the night, wakening the sleeping humans. Etjar was on his feet instantly, his bow drawn and pointed in the direction of the scream. Trust him to arise from a sound sleep ready and able to fight. Marissa was just a moment slower, while the pilgrims uttered confused cries as they struggled with their tangle of bedding.

The soldier shot another arrow into the shape he barely perceived in the darkness, shooting by instinct as much as sight. The shrill scream cut off as suddenly as it started, leaving a stunning silence in its wake.

A pair of growls came from either side of the falling shape, and Trajan's third arrow missed its target as two huge humanoid shapes hurdled the barrier, both intent on the dwarfed human soldier. He blocked a slash with his bow but the force snapped the bow in half and ripped it from his hands.

The second shape spun him from his feet as its claws opened his left arm from shoulder to elbow with 3 neat cuts. As he fell the second clawed arm slashed across his back, snapping links in his chainmail shirt, opening bloody gouges. As the first one moved in for the kill an arrow sprouted from its side, followed by a brother. Screaming in pain and rage the creature spun and charged Etjar. He dropped his bow and swept his sword from its sheath, lighting the scene with its magical glow, slashing and blocking the ugly claws. The claws must be made of something as strong as steel because the magically sharp sword failed to cut through, screaming in a clash sounding like metal on metal. The light of the sword surprised the creature as it back pedaled.

Meanwhile the second creature yanked Trajan from the ground in preparation for biting into his skull. Before it could bite three bolts of brightly green glowing magical energy punctured the creature's side, leaving burn marks on its dark green skin.

Dropping the helpless human in a sprawled heap it turned at the woman who struck it with magical energy. Rushing her with unreal speed it raised its claws to slash her to ribbons. Frantically casting another spell she completed it just as it reached her. A fan of flame burst from her right hand, striking it in the face and leaving blisters in its wake. Recoiling blindly in agony the creature slashed futilely at the air and turned to flee. Moving with the same unreal speed it cleared the rocks and piled bushes in a single leap to disappear into the darkness.

The other feinted at Etjar and bound over the barrier to join its companion in the darkness.

Trajan groaned and his face was already covered with the sheen of perspiration. While he didn't look anywhere near as bad as the pilgrim had before he died, he didn't look good. The woman rushed to his side, plucking the small copper bottle from her pocket, unstopping it, and pouring its contents into his upturned mouth. Nearly choking on the liquid he managed to swallow most of it. A minute passed and his breathing steadied.

"What is that stuff?" Etjar asked.

"A potion that is an antidote to most poisons. I got to him quickly enough."

"But not soon enough to help Hessan," Hax sneered.

Rounding on the man Marissa snarled, "No, not soon enough. We didn't know they were poisonous."

Hax started to snarl in return when Etjar poked him in the shoulder hard enough to spin him half around. "Be thankful we were here. If we hadn't been you'd all be brainless now." He looked thoughtfully at the man. "Although I'm not sure anyone would notice." Normally a tactful man Etjar instantly dredged up insults when the mood took him. The smaller man backed off with fear and anger on his face.

Turning back he saw Marissa kneeling, cleaning Trajan's wounds. The wounded man started to thank her but groaned when she scrubbed hard at one wound. "Hey, take it easy, won't you!" he complained.

"If you ducked faster I wouldn't need to do this. Stop whining."

Etjar shook his head. When they decided to kill each other he wasn't betting which would win.

Three days later the trio stumbled up to the southern gate of Kerr along with a single pilgrim. Hax and the others lay dead behind them along the road.

* * *

"They killed the other pilgrims?"

"There were six of 'em, two adults and four half-grown young-uns. After I killed the one young-un the big ones kept after us, trying to ambush us."

"What did they do?"

"Kept trying to ambush us. Instead of straggling we had to stay bunched up. We lost Hax and another pilgrim 'cuz they got too far from us. Almost lost the wizard, too. We finally killed both of the adults and another of the young-uns. No idea what happened to the other two."

"You didn't like the wizard, did you?"

"Nope. She and I rubbed each other the wrong way from the first moment we met." Trajan was about to expound further on the topic but David interjected another question.

"Gree-kins are poisonous?"

"Yes, David, gree-kins are poisonous. Deadly poisonous. Most people don't survive a clawing."

"Why did they keep attacking you?"

"Gree-kins mostly travel alone and attack lone travelers. The group we met was a family, and after I killed the young-un the parents seemed bound to kill us all."

"Why do they bite people's heads off?"

"They don't bite heads off, they crack the skull so they can eat brains. And they don't suck brains out through your nose."

"Why …"

"DAVID!" Standing beside them was a young man or an old boy, depending on point of view. He had arrived unnoticed in the flurry of questions and answers.

"Bisonbit!" Jake and David yelped in harmony.

"Time for lessons. Get your butts moving or I'll kick them all the way to the temple!"

Trajan cut off the grumbles. "Time for you boys to get to your lessons." Silently he added, "*and spare me from more questions*." 'Why' was David's favorite question, no matter what the previous answer was. As much as Trajan liked the boy, some time off from him was good.

The two boys trundled dejectedly off behind the older boy ...

Gree-Kin

Frequency:	rare
No. App.:	1 (1d6)
Armour Class:	5
Move:	21"

Hit Dice:	9 to 12
% in Lair:	70%
Treasure Type:	C, R, S
No. of Attacks:	2
Damage/Attack:	2d6, 2d6
Special Attacks:	bite, poison
Special Defences:	regeneration
Magic Resistance:	5%
Intelligence:	high
Alignment:	Chaotic Neutral
Size:	L (12' tall)

Appearance:

Gree-kins are large, hairless humanoids with greenish-grey skins, a large red spot on the forehead, and 6 clawed fingers on each hand. They are usually found near cities and along trade routes because of a strange dietary requirement – human and demi-human brains.

Combat:

These huge predators attack twice per round, once with each six-clawed hand. Each hit inflicts 2d6 hit points of damage and may inject poison. The victim must make a saving throw vs. poison each round they are struck or suffer 1 hp/turn loss until death occurs. A new save is allowed every 4 hours, success indicating the victim's body successfully fought off the poison. Note that the hit point loss is cumulative, e.g., if a victim is struck in three different rounds, 3 hp are lost each turn, although a single saving throw made after 4 hours ceases the loss. **Slow Poison** will slow the loss and **Neutralize Poison** will cure it.

If both hands hit in one round, this indicates the gree-kin has latched onto its victim, and automatically scores 2d6 points of bite damage each round thereafter. The held victim may fight back, but at -2 on all attack rolls, and may not use a weapon longer than 2'.

Gree-kins regenerate 1 hit point per round although not from death. At 12 hit points or less the creature will feign death so as to regenerate to fight another day.

Note that gree-kins are highly intelligent – they will use good planning for their attacks, and will observe potential victims for a while to gauge how dangerous they are. While they can be impulsive gree-kins will not normally attack superior forces without surprise. They prefer hit-and-run instead of a stand-up fight, except against single characters or parties significantly weaker than they are.

Single gree-kins typically attack in the dark, attempting to hurt or kill a victim and carry it off. As stated above, if low on hit points the gree-kin will feign death, but will usually first break off combat if it sustains the loss of half its hit points. If the gree-kin poisons one or more characters it may break off combat and shadow the group, waiting for the victims to die.

Habitat/Society:

The majority (85%) of gree-kin encounters are with a single adult. Occasionally (10%) a pair of mated adults will be encountered, and less frequently (5%) encounters are with 1 or 2 adults with 1 to 4 adolescents.

Although the mating is believed to be temporary, a mated pair will fight to protect each other. If encountered in their lair with young, the adult gree-kins will attack ferociously at +2 to hit, gaining double attacks for the first three rounds of combat. They will not feign death nor break off combat while their young live, but will flee if the young are killed. Note that in this case the gree-kin (s) will shadow the group seeking revenge.

The male will typically remain with the female until the young are grown enough to take care of themselves, approximately 3 years old. At that time the family will split up completely, possibly never seeing each other again.

Ecology:

Gree-kins are greatly feared because they eat the brains of their victims. Any character carried off will typically be killed, and their brain eaten within the hour.

Studies indicate they are omnivorous, eating a diet consisting of primarily plant matter, with occasional insects and small creatures. While they will eat the brains of humanoids, they show a clear preference for more intelligent creatures, although they will not eat the brain of non-humanoid creatures regardless of intelligence. No one knows why they eat brain – it must satisfy a dietary need, as a mated couple with young will go on killing frenzies to bring brains back to their children.

Sages have tried to study gree-kins, with limited success. They don't survive well in captivity, either escaping or eventually refusing to eat and starving to death. Efforts to communicate with them typically fail –gree-kins may have a language but do not use it in front of others. Their escape ability demonstrates their intelligence, but it is clearly non-human intelligence.

Variants:

None.

Experience Point Values:

	DMG	LL
9 HD	VII / 2,600 + 12 xp/hp	VII / 3,000 + 14/hp
10 HD	VIII / 3,900 + 14 xp/hp	VIII / 3,700 + 15/hp
11 HD	IX / 5,550 + 16 xp/hp	VIII / 4,400 + 16/hp
12 HD	IX / 5,550 + 16 xp/hp	IX / 5,250 + 17/hp

The author uses the 5% table published by Len Lakofka in Dragon Magazine. XP values for both the DMG and Mr. Lakofka's system are provided.

Salamander Sword *

This weapon is a **Scimitar +2** and has a blood red blade, always glistening as if wet. Once per day it can cast **Heat Metal** for up to 4 targets within a 40' radius of the wielder.

Heat Metal excites the molecules of ferrous metal (iron, iron alloys, steel), causing the metal to become hot over a seven round period. On round 1 the effect merely causes the metal to be very warm and uncomfortable to touch, and this is also the effect round 7. The second and sixth round effect is to cause blisters and damage; the third, fourth, and fifth rounds the metal becomes searing hot, causing disability and damage to exposed flesh.

Metal Temperature	Damage	Disability
very warm	none	none
hot	1d4 hp	none
searing	2d4 hp	head 1d4 turns unconscious; hands or feet 2d4 days; body 1d4 days

Note also that materials such as wood, leather, or flammable cloth will smolder and burn if exposed to searing hot metal, and such materials will then cause searing damage to exposed flesh on the next round. **Fire Resistance** (potion or ring) or a **Protection From Fire Spell** totally negates the effects, as does immersion in water or snow, or exposure to a cold or ice storm spell.

While the metal is heating the wielder of the blade may continue to fight, flee, etc. However, he cannot sheathe the blade and continue the heating. For each victim slain during the heating time the heating time itself extends another 7 round cycle. When a victim is slain another may be added to the heat metal effect to the maximum of 4 at any given time. The weapon may only be wielded by those of chaotic alignment, and those of good alignment would need to reserve its use for the most heinous of offenders. If the wielder of the sword ever kills enough victims to generate a 4th round of heating, the sword must save versus magical lightning or explode, doing 5d10 damage.

GP value 8,000; XP value 2,800 *by Ian Slater*

Creature Feature III: Jellies

by Dan Rasaiah

Two totally unrelated jellies

Giant Box Jellyfish

Frequency:	Very Rare
No. App.:	1
Size:	Large (30'+)
Move:	12" Swimming
Armour Class:	9
Hit Dice:	6
Attacks:	1d10
Damage:	1d4 Per Tentacle
Special Attacks:	Poison
Special Defences:	Transparent
Magic Resistance:	Standard
Lair Probability:	Nil
Intelligence:	Animal
Alignment:	Neutral
Treasure:	Nil
Level/XP:	750+ 6/hp

These large invertebrates, can be distinguished by their large umbrella shaped bell (6 feet across). There will be up to 15 tentacles, (each extending up to 30' in length) growing from the corners of the bell. Both 'head' and tentacles are translucent and invisible 90% of the time to normal eyesight.

Each tentacle of the box jellyfish contains stingers with extremely powerful nerve toxins. Victims hit must save vs. poison at -2 or die (one save required per tentacle hit). Tentacle hits cause 1d4 damage regardless of whether the saving throw is successful or not.

Giant box jellyfish are highly advanced among jellies. They have developed the ability to move rather than just drift, jetting at up to 120 yards/minute through the water. They also have eyes grouped in clusters of six on the four sides of their bell, making them impossible to surprise using non-magical means.

They are carnivorous creatures, and trawl the great oceans for prey of any kind. Once slain, creatures are absorbed into the bell and digested over 2d6 turns.

Dungeon Jelly

Frequency:	Rare
No. App.:	1
Size:	M (4 to 5HD) L (6 to 8HD)
Move:	6"
Armour Class:	8
Hit Dice:	4 To 8
Attacks:	8 to 16 (2 tentacles per HD)
Damage:	1d2
Special Attacks:	Paralysis
Special Defences:	Camouflage
Magic Resistance:	Standard
Lair Probability:	Nil
Intelligence:	Non
Alignment:	Neutral
Treasure:	Nil
Level/XP:	IV / 175 + 4/hp V / 245 + 5/hp VI / 425 + 6/hp

VII / 650 + 8/hp
VIII / 1000 + 10/hp

The terrestrial cousin of jellyfish, dungeon jellies inhabit subterranean areas where they constantly rove in search of food. Any species of animate matter will be attacked by the jelly, who surprise opponents 1-5 in 6 due to their natural camouflage. Even after attacking prey, these translucent creatures are incredibly difficult to spot (-2 to hit).

They vary dramatically in size and will attack with a number of paralytic tentacles commensurate with body size. Each hit by a tentacle will result in the victim being injected with paralytic toxins (save vs. paralysis at -2) and also a minor amount of acidic damage. One saving throw is required per tentacle hit. A paralysed victim will be dragged into the center 'body' of the amorphous creature, where it will sustain 1d4 hp damage per HD of the dungeon jelly per round, as it is digested by its acidic 'stomach' secretions. Items carried will also need to make saving throws versus acid per round. A medium sized dungeon jelly can simultaneously digest two medium sized creatures whilst a large sized dungeon jelly can digest up to four medium sized creatures (numbers are doubled for small sized creatures).

Dungeon jellies are capable of scaling sheer surfaces with ease and are as comfortable lurking on passageway ceilings as the floor. This is due to the sticky residue exuded by the creature's tentacles.

Dungeon jellies will instinctively avoid fire, and as such will rarely attack a torch bearer or someone carrying a flaming brand.

Sword of the Waghalter

This sword has a +1 enchantment and has an engraving of a clenched fist on the base of the blade on both sides. The blade, when in possession of a thief, allows him +4 to hit and +2 to damage on all pummeling attacks, and enables him to do subdual damage (75% temp, 25% real) with the sword.

Sword type (1d6): 1 short, 2-5 broad, 6 long. GP value 14,000; XP value 2,000

Sword of Suspension

This sword is a +1 magical weapon. Thrice per day it allows the wielder to walk on any surface (water, swamp, mud, dirt, ice) as if it were dry ground, for up to 3 turns at a time.

Note that 1% of these swords are cursed and on their 10th use will invoke a **Rock to Mud** spell on the ground beneath the wielder in a 20' radius.

Sword type (1d8): 1-3 short, 4-6 broad, 7-8 long. GP value 6,000; XP value 1,000

by Ian Slater

Friend or Foe: The Band of Three

by Bryan Fazekas

Good people to know when you need someone brought back dead or alive – especially dead

The *Band of Three* are bounty hunters, specializing in bringing back, dead or alive, the worst criminals at the best possible price. Well, the best price for the Band. They do not work cheap, but they have a reputation for always bringing back their target.

Zadok, the leader of this band, is famous for his strong adherence to the letter of the law. He hunts down fugitives with a zeal that can be frightening to all who encounter him. Justice isn't important to him, just the letter of the law. Although he has turned down commissions when he decided the target was not guilty of breaking a law, once he accepts a commission he never gives up.

The band often hires local talent to assist in cornering a fugitive. The Band promises a death duty paid to the heirs of any hirelings killed in the line of duty. Zadok always pays the duty … but seems to pay it often. Hiring on with him is not a safe choice.

Zadok

Zadok, , is a bear of a man standing 6' 6" and weighing in at 260 lbs. His frame carries no fat, it bulges with muscles. He looks like he can tear any door off its hinges, and he has done that more than once. In contrast to his huge frame he is incredibly good looking, having long dark brown hair usually kept in a ponytail, framing a ruggedly handsome face. Women and men react positively to him at first sight.

Unfortunately his charisma, which is merely average, doesn't match his exceedingly good looks and prevents him from maintaining that strong initial impression. His name means "righteous" in his native tongue and he personifies his name. During any lengthy conversations he generally grates on people's nerves, ruining their good opinion of him. After many years (he's 42) he has learned to keep short interactions with people with whom he wants to do business and stick to the subject at hand. Prisoners are never so fortunate, and it is laughingly rumored that several have asked to be killed rather than have to continue listening to him.

Apprenticed to a bounty hunter at age 8, he grew up in the business and was independent by age 16, after his master was killed by a prisoner they were transporting back for justice. Zadok learned from the experience, and now when given the choice of "dead or alive" he opts for "dead" as dead men usually don't try to kill him. (Although he takes precautions against bodies rising.)

Zadok, human male fighter level 7; hp 81; Align LN; Str 18/94; Int 12; Wis 14; Dex 16; Con 17; Cha 9; Com 17.

He is double specialized with the trident, having +2 to-hit and damage and 3/2 attacks. He is also proficient in longbow, mace, and long sword.

Author's note: I use an alternate weapon specialization system that is not quite as powerful as the one presented in Unearthed Arcana. *This is available on my web site: http://www.bkfazekas.com/add/. DMs can use the UA specialization if desired. Note that this will change to-hit and damage bonuses.*

Zadok normally fights with his **Trident +3, Shocking Strike**. In the field he normally wears **Banded Mail +2** carries a **Shield +2**, and with Dexterity has an effective AC of -3. His magic bow was broken years back, but he generally carries a quiver each of normal and magical arrows, mostly **Arrows +1** with a sprinkling of **Arrows +2**, and a few **Arrows of Stunning +3**.

In places where metal armor is prohibited or problematic, he has a set of **Leather Armor +2** and a **Buckler +1**, which gives him AC 2. In the field he also carries a long sword and mace, and will use a

short mace in areas where a smaller weapon is indicated.

Rebekah

Rebekah looks like a fitting complement for Zadok. This high elf stands a bit over 6' tall and is willowy with tremendous good looks. She is more charismatic than Zadok, and he has learned to let her carry conversations. She claims to be just over 100 years but Zadok believes her to be nearing 300. Her connection to truth is not a firm one.

No one knows much about her background. She has traveled with Zadok for nearly 20 years, and he has heard various versions of her background but believes none of them. She avoids high elven, and grey elven lands like the plague, making a variety of excuses for not traveling to such places. Zadok will sometimes mention taking an elven commission just to see what excuse she invents. Her reasons may be unknown, but she will not travel into elven lands of her own volition.

Rebekah is an alias – when Zadok first met her she used a variety of human names and settled on Rebekah, a name from his home land. A fact that he has never shared with anyone is that "Rebekah" translates as "ensnarer", a fact he does not forget.

What he does know, is that she always thinks of herself first. So far she has never betrayed him, but he avoids situations where her self-interest and his life might disagree. She has taken many lovers over the years, and has offered herself to him more than once, but Zadok has enough sense to not mix business and pleasure, especially not with her.

Rebekah travels with Zadok for her own reasons. He is a generally good traveling companion although he tends to be self-righteous. She cares little of law and order, but likes a good adventure, travel, and the money.

Rebekah, high elven female fighter level 4, magic user level 8; hp 63; Align NE; Str 13; Int 17; Wis 10; Dex 17; Con 16; Cha 14; Com 15.

Spell books: 1st Level: Affect Normal Fires, Burning Hands, Charm Person, Detect Magic, Identify, Light, Magic Missile, Read Magic, Shocking Grasp, Spider Climb, Unseen Servant, Write. 2nd Level: Continual Light, Darkness 15' Radius, Detect Invisibility, ESP, Mirror Image, Stinking Cloud, Strength, Web, Wizard Lock. 3rd Level: Clairaudience, Dispel Magic, Fireball, Fly, Hold Person, Lightning Bolt, Monster Summoning I, Slow, Suggestion. 4th Level: Charm Monster, Fear, Minor Globe of Invulnerability, Polymorph Self, Wizard Eye.

Spells in memory: Charm Person, Light, Shocking Grasp, Unseen Servant, ESP, Mirror Image, Web, Fly, Hold Person, Lightning Bolt, Charm Monster, Minor Globe of Invulnerability.

She started out as a fighter, and years before meeting Zadok became a wizard. She is specialized in short bow, giving her +1 to-hit and damage at short and medium ranges, plus 3 shots per combat round. This is in addition to her +1 to-hit elven proficiency. She is also proficient in short sword and flail from her fighter days, and more recently in dagger and staff.

The spells this elf normally carries in memory reflex her "me first" attitude. She will use the *Unseen Servant* to impress people, *Charm Person* and *Charm Monster* to acquire temporary allies (meat shields), *ESP* to learn secrets, and the *Minor Globe* as personal protection any time the group is up against any type of spell caster.

Rebekah carries a **Short Bow +2** and two quivers of arrows, one normal and one magical. The magical arrows are mostly **Arrows +1**, but she does have a few special ones like **Arrow of Fireball *** and **Arrow of Lightning ***, which each do 6d6 damage in addition to weapon damage. She hoards these against need, but generally avoids personal combat.

She normally dresses in grey patterned pants and blouse, always with lots of hidden pockets. Under the long sleeves she wears **Bracers of Defense AC4** and a **Ring of Protection +2**, giving her an effective AC -1.

She carries a **Dagger +2** along with several non-magical daggers, and where possible her favorite **Short Sword +2**. While she dislikes personal combat she is quite capable.

** See & Magazine issue 4 for descriptions of this item.*

Uzziah

This half-orc is a recent addition to the group, having joined them less than a year ago. He was a hireling for a job in Zadok's homeland, and was brought into the group full time for the way he fought out of the ambush that killed his predecessor.

Uzziah is a cleric of Hextor, the lesser god of war, discord, conflict, and fitness. He wears black robes adorned with embroidered grey faces. Some small percentage of half-orcs can pass for human – Uzziah is not one of them. His Orcish heritage is plain to see and he makes no attempt to disguise it. But his ill looks are mitigated by his charisma. While not as charismatic as Rebekah, he often counteracts the negative feelings induced by his Orcish looks and stark clothing.

The half-orc was taken in by clerics of Hextor when his human mother abandoned him after birth. He knows nothing of her, or his birth, other than he was unwanted. While he had a few good friends while growing up, he had more enemies who looked down upon his heritage. In his early 20's he left the temple to be a roving priest, and eventually fell in with the bounty hunters as a natural place for his abilities.

The half-orc, whose name translates as "my strength", believes in law as much as Zadok does, although his methods tend to be blunter and more tragic for the fugitive. He has no sympathy for their targets and agrees that "dead" is safer for the Band than "alive". However, his word is his bond, and any agreement made in good faith will be fulfilled, regardless of the cost to him.

He is intensely loyal to his leader and is in love with Rebekah. She flirts with him and sometimes flaunts her lovers, which leaves him miserable. Zadok has repeatedly warned the cleric off the elf, but his superior wisdom is not sufficient to defeat his infatuation.

Uzziah, half-orc male cleric level 7, assassin level 1; hp 59; Align LE; Str 17; Int 11; Wis 16; Dex 16; Con 16; Cha 12; Com 8.

Uzziah carries the favored weapon of his deity, a **Scimitar +1**. He also has a flail and a long bow, and like the others carries a quiver of normal and of magical arrows. His arrows are mostly **Arrow +1** with a sprinkling of **Arrow +2** and a pair of **Arrow +3**. His prize is an **Arrow of Slaying Magic Users**, which he is saving for the day when they are tasked to retrieve an arch-mage. His dream is to take down an arch-mage in the hopes that it will impress Rebekah enough to further his quest to gain her affections.

In the field he wears **Full Plate Armor +1** and carries a **Shield +1**, giving him AC -4.

Unknown to the others, his advanced training as a cleric of Hextor has given him the abilities of first level assassin. He is forbidden to share this information with anyone; even his infatuation with Rebekah is not enough for him to break a prohibition levied upon him by his superiors in the church. For assassinations he uses a **Dagger +1 of Poison**. He uses a caustic poison that inflicts 10 points of damage, save for half.

Group Interactions

Zadok is a good commander, he doesn't expend his people gratuitously. He always acts in good faith with respect to his Band, his hirelings and his clients. But he will expend either if he needs to do so. As previously noted he doesn't trust Rebekah where his need conflicts with her self-interest. She is useful and has always honored her commitments, but he has no illusions where she is concerned.

Uzziah he trusts implicitly. The half-orc has earned the leader's good opinion, although his infatuation for the elf is a matter of concern. Zadok expects this to get the cleric killed at some point, or to possibly kill Rebekah. The human realizes that the half-orc's prized **Arrow of Slaying Magic User** will work just fine on the elven temptress, although she doesn't appear to have considered this fact.

Rebekah has one overriding concern – herself. She is intelligent enough to realize that she should disguise this fact, but her wisdom is insufficient to allow her to keep it from her leader. She knows that if she ever betrays Zadok she had best ensure he's dead. If not he will find her and the meeting will be unpleasant for her, at least briefly.

Uzziah? His loyalty to Zadok and love for Rebekah produce a conflict. He fears that at some point he may be forced to betray one or the other and rues that day. What he doesn't know is that Zadok expended the cleric's predecessor, using him to get the remainder of the band and hirelings out of a fatal trap. Although the half-orc's world view accepts this as the price a good leader must pay to ensure the survival of his group, if he did find out it would drastically alter his blind loyalty towards the human fighter.

The Band will always act fairly and with honor in dealings with employers and hirelings, or others with whom they deal. Others may not be so fortunate, depending upon the circumstances. The high elf will always act honorably, except in circumstances where neither of her compatriots will find out, and where her self-interest indicates she should do otherwise.

New Magic Items

Trident +3, Shocking Strike

This weapon is useful for subduing foes. Any natural to-hit roll of 18 or better that hits causes 3d4 points of electrical damage to be transmitted into the victim, in addition to the weapon damage. The electrical damage is half actual and half subdual, and the victim must make a saving throw vs. Spells or be stunned for 1d2 rounds. Subdual hit points are recovered at a rate of 1 hp every 3 rounds, starting 1 turn after being struck. Any creature reduced to less than zero hp but not killed, will regain consciousness after 4d4 rounds.

GP value 10,000; XP value 1,600

Arrow of Stunning +3

These magic arrows are of exceptional value, having +3 to-hit and damage. In addition, any victim struck by one of these arrows must save vs. Breath Weapon at -3 or be stunned for 3d4 rounds. These arrows are effective on creatures of 600 lbs or less. Creatures up to 1,200 lbs save normally, and more massive creatures are unaffected by the stunning.

GP value 1,000; XP value 100

Dagger +1 of Poison

This dagger holds enough poison for three strikes and upon a successful strike, the poison is injected into the victim. The magic of the dagger causes the victim to save at -1 vs. poison.

Note: although similar to the Dagger of Venom (DMG, page 168) this item has some key differences.

GP value 400; XP value 4,000

Sword of the Sparrow *

This short sword a +1 magical weapon. Twice per day when the wielder flees from an adversary, the wielder may cause winds to whip up and swirl dirt and dust such that any attacks on their back are at -4 to hit, their move will increase by 2.5 rather than 2 while charging for up to 1 turn.

Once a week the wielder may invoke the above effect and an additional **Protection From Normal Missiles** for 1 turn.

Note that 1% of these blades are cursed and compel their user to save versus spell whenever contemplating a brave act, and if they fail they will avoid that act.

GP value 7,000; XP value 2,500

by Ian Slater

The Toybox I: New Weapons III – India and the Stars

by Nicole Massey

Let's take a trip to the orient, specifically to India and Nepal, first this time.

Category: Arms – Missile Weapons

Khukuri

Unit size:	Each
Price:	2gp
encumbrance:	18
Length:	9" to 15"
Width:	7"
HP/DP:	n/a
Damage (S/M):	1d4
Damage (L):	1d4
Speed:	2
Rate of Fire:	2/1
Range (S):	5'
Range (M):	6' to 7'
Range (L):	8'
AC/AC Mod:	0
THAC0:	0
Storage Cap:	0
Where Found:	Weaponsmith
When Found:	Medieval
Zone:	Orient

Description: Nepali Angle bladed dagger.

Category: Arms – Blades

Sword, Kora

Unit size:	Each
Price:	15gp
encumbrance:	0
Length:	2' to 3.5'
Width:	4"
HP/DP:	n/a
Damage (S/M):	2d4
Damage (L):	1d6
Speed:	9
Rate of Fire:	-
Range (S):	7'
Range (M):	8'
Range (L):	9'
AC/AC Mod:	0
THAC0:	0
Storage Cap:	0
Where Found:	Weaponsmith
When Found:	Medieval
Zone:	Orient

Description: Nepalese sword with a bent blade, also called a brodrack, and similar to the southeast Asian machete called a parang.

Sword, Urumi

Unit size:	Each
Price:	50gp
encumbrance:	40
Length:	3' to 4.5'
Width:	3" to 5"
HP/DP:	n/a
Damage (S/M):	1d8
Damage (L):	1d8
Speed:	7
Rate of Fire:	1
Range (S):	5'
Range (M):	10'
Range (L):	20'
AC/AC Mod:	–
THAC0:	0
Storage Cap:	0
Where Found:	Weaponsmith
When Found:	Medieval
Zone:	Orient

Description: a long sword with a blade that is flexible enough to be coiled up. This weapon originates from southern India.

Now let's take a look at some weapons converted from a popular television series, weapons from the stars!

Category: Arms – Pole Arms

Lirpa

Unit size:	Each
Price:	17gp
encumbrance:	120
Length:	5'
Width:	10"
HP/DP:	n/a
Damage (S/M):	1d10
Damage (L):	1d10
Speed:	6
Rate of Fire:	1
Range (S):	6' to 7'
Range (M):	8'
Range (L):	9'
AC/AC Mod:	0
THAC0:	0
Storage Cap:	0
Where Found:	Weaponsmith
When Found:	War - Medieval
Zone:	Any

Description: A staff with a heavy ball or bell shaped weight on one end and a half circle cutting blade on the other. The blade is mounted to the staff in the middle, so it only slashes.

Nu shan tor

Unit size:	Each
Price:	5gp
encumbrance:	15
Length:	7"
Width:	3"
HP/DP:	n/a
Damage (S/M):	1d4
Damage (L):	1d4
Speed:	1
Rate of Fire:	-
Range (S):	5'
Range (M):	6' to 7'
Range (L):	8'
AC/AC Mod:	0
THAC0:	0
Storage Cap:	0
Category:	Arms - Blades
Where Found:	Weaponsmith
When Found:	Medieval
Zone:	Any

Description: A band like brass knuckles around the fingers, with a very sharp crescent shaped blade attached across the knuckle bow, and ending in two very sharp points.

Category: Arms – Entangling

Sash - Combat

Unit size:	Each
Price:	4sp
encumbrance:	2.5
Length:	3'
Width:	2"
HP/DP:	n/a
Damage (S/M):	1d4
Damage (L):	1d2
Speed:	2
Rate of Fire:	-
Range (S):	5'
Range (M):	6'
Range (L):	7'
AC/AC Mod:	-1
THAC0:	0
Storage Cap:	0
Where Found:	tailor
When Found:	Primitive
Zone:	Any

Description: A belt of cloth or woven metal designed to entangle.

Fighters may, of course, use any of these weapons, as may assassins. Only the Kora is acceptable for cavaliers and paladins, while rangers may use the khukuri, kora, and urumi. Thieves may use the khukuri, nu shan tor, and combat sash. Clerics may only use the combat sash unless their deity allows edged weapons, in which case it's up to the referee as to which of these the character can use. Druids may use the khukuri and kora (it resembles a

Weapon vs. Armor Adjustments table

AC	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Khukuri	-4	-4	-3	-3	-2	-2	0	0	1	1	3
Sword, Kora	-7	-6	-5	-4	-2	-1	0	0	1	1	2
Sword, Urumi	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
Lirpa	0	0	0	1	1	3	3	3	4	4	5
Nu shan tor	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	0	0	1	0	0
Sash - Combat	-14	-12	-10	-8	-6	-4	-2	-1	-1	0	3

scimitar). Magic-users may use only the khukuri. Monks may use the khukuri and combat sash. None of these weapons save the combat sash, khukuri, and kora are appropriate for bards.

More new weapons next time!

Rogues Blade

by Ian Slater

This +1 magical weapon is a boon to both thieves and non-thieves. The blade grants a non-thief the ability to perform one thieving skill at 3rd level of thieving ability, and enables a thief to improve that specific skill 5 levels when the sword is on their person. Roll a 1d8 to determine which skill is represented by the blade:

1d8	Skill
1	Pick Pockets
2	Open Locks
3	Find/Remove Traps
4	Move Silently
5	Hide in Shadows
6	Hear Noise
7	Climb Walls
8	Real Languages

If Move Silently was rolled a 5th level thief using the sword would perform this skill at 10th level of ability. Note that 1% of these blades add to ALL of the thief skills and are highly valued, while another 1% of these swords are cursed and reduce all thieving skills by 5 levels (roll d100, 01=cursed, 00=all abilities improved).

Sword type (1d6): 1-3 short, 4-5 broad, 6 long. GP value 7,000; XP value 1,000

The Toybox II: Druidic Magic Items

by Dan Rasaiah

Goodberry Necklace

Appears as a mundane weave of ivy and twigs with eight red berries attached. These berries may be consumed, and have the same effect as the 2nd level clerical spell **Goodberry**. If worn by a druid, the necklace will regenerate the berries (to a maximum of eight berries) every 24 hour period. The necklace also confers a +1 bonus to armor class and saving throws (as Ring of Protection) when worn around the neck of a druid.

This necklace was the creation of the druid Shadrin Holyoak.

GP value 15,000; XP value 3,000

Irish Stag Cap

This leather and wood cap resembles a half face helm, with small stag antlers growing from either side, and a small shrunken deer skull motif on the forehead. Twice per day the wearer may lower his head and charge an enemy, at which point the antlers will grow to monstrous size and deliver a powerful blow (3d6 hp damage) with any natural roll of 18-20 requiring a save vs paralyzation or the victim (M sized or smaller) will be bowled over and stunned for 1d4 rounds. The usual charge rules (+2 to hit, maximum 1 charge per turn) apply as normal. This item may only be used by druids.

GP value 7,500; XP value 1,500

Cudgel of Speed

This gnarled cudgel enables the druid to strike twice per round (speed factor 2) for 1d6 hps damage each strike. The cudgel counts as a +1 weapon for purposes of which creatures may be struck, although there is no to hit or damage bonus.

GP value 7,500; XP value 1,500

Wand of Thorns

In the hands of a druid this wand can perform 3 functions:

1. **Cone of thorns:** sharp jagged thorns spray forth from the wand in a cone with a 3" length and a terminal diameter of 1". The thorns cause 6d6 damage (save versus wands for half) for all caught in the cone. This function expends 1 charge.
2. **Wall of thorns:** as per the Druidic spell, producing a wall of up to 60" cubed (e.g., 6" long 1" deep, etc.). This function expends 2 charges.
3. **Thorn storm:** a grey ray springs forth from the wand and in 1 segment a maelstrom of razor sharp thorns occurs up to 6" distant from the wand holder. The thorn storm causes all within a 3" diameter of the area of effect to suffer 3d8 damage with no saving throw. This function expends 2 charges

GP value 30,000; XP value 5,000

Ring of the Bear

This simple dark oaken band allows the druidic wearer to summon the Guardian of the Crimson Forest, a Flame Bear which will obey the druid's command. The bear may be summoned once per day for up to 1 hour, at which point it will return to the ring and regenerate any damage sustained. If the bear is slain it is banished to the ring and may not be summoned again for 1 month. If the ring is destroyed, the bear is slain forever.

The Flame Bear has statistics identical to a brown bear. In addition it may only be hit by magical weapons, it is immune to normal and magical fire, and all within 5' take 1d6 fire damage per round from its magical corona.

GP value 30,000; XP value 5,500

Ring of Change

This gold ring is adorned with green emeralds, and enhances the shape-changing ability of druids of 7th level or higher. On the finger of such a druid, the ring enables the druid to change form up to three times per day, actually becoming, in all respects save the mind, a reptile, bird or mammal.

4. Each type of creature form can be assumed twice per day.
5. The size of the reptile, bird, mammal may be from as small as a miniature chameleon, bee hummingbird, or shrew, to as large as a giant snake, a giant eagle, or a brown bear.
6. Each new form removes 10%-80% of the hps damage, if any, that the druid has sustained prior to changing form.

GP value 30,000; XP value 5,000

Saurian Ring

These bronze rings have a setting containing a minuscule dinosaur fossil (magically shrunk) preserved in amber. If the wearer is a druid of 7th level or higher, the ring allows the ability to shapechange into the form of dinosaur corresponding to the fossil in the ring. Roll a 1d10 to determine which ring has been found:

1d10	Dinosaur
1-4	Kentrosaurus (MM2)
5-7	Giant Pterosaur
8-9	Tanystropheus
10	Gorgosaurus

The wearer gains the ability to change form up to 3 times per day, actually becoming, in all respects save the mind, the dinosaur represented by the ring. It is believed that these rings were created by the Arch-Druid Ramestes, who spent his middle years in the prehistoric jungles of Atazor.

GP value 6,000/HD of the dinosaur; XP value 1,000/HD of the dinosaur

The Green Staff

This potent magical item was the creation of The Great Druidess 'Iltani Enhe-Ishtar', and resembles a 6' long verdant staff constructed from an unknown hardwood tree. (Sages speculate that the staff was in fact constructed from the deceased Treant 'Cedelliembyl'; a father of the forest of the largest size, and longtime friend of Iltani.)

When the staff's powers are invoked, it glows with an internal lustrous emerald light, making the staff almost appear crystalline in nature.

The staff has the following powers which do not drain charges:

- Detect Magic
- Speak With Animals
- Faerie Fire
- Detect Snares and Pits
- Locate Animals

The following powers drain 1 charge per usage:

- Barkskin
- Heat Metal
- Create Water
- Call Lightning
- Locate Plants
- Hold Animal
- Pyrotechnics
- Summon Insects
- Tree
- Speak With Plants
- Hallucinatory Forest

The following powers drain 2 charges per usage:

- Animal Summoning II
- Insect Plague
- Animal Growth
- Anti-Plant Shell

The staff makes the wielder immune to all kinds of natural poisons and diseases whilst the staff is carried.

If the staff is snapped by the wielder (a purposeful and declared action by the druid), it releases a **Creeping Doom** of maximum size (1,000 hp) on the position of the staff. There is a 50% chance that the druid will be instantly teleported to a random forest 1,000 miles away, else, he/she will be destroyed alongside the staff and all else in the immediate vicinity. Note, the staff can only be used by druids, and it's powers will be telepathically communicated when held by such a class.

GP value 75,000; XP value 15,000

Flask of Tree Animation

This small flask contains a powerful arcane fertilizer which when poured upon the roots of a tree 15' in height or greater, will animate the tree (size and stats of 7 HD Treant) which will then proceed to do the druid's bidding. The transformation takes 1d4+2 rounds to complete, and the animated tree will remain in such a state for 6d6 turns. Upon the expiration of the magic, the tree will halt and put roots down (if applicable). Each flask contains 3 applications.

GP value 5,000; XP value 1,500

Shadow Blade

by Ian Slater

A **Shadow Blade** is not specifically a thief weapon – it works the same for all wielders. The sword is made of dull black metal that catches no light. Normally +1 to-hit and damage, in shadows it becomes +4. For this reason it is highly prized amongst thieves.

Note that 1% of these swords are cursed and every time a victim is slain the wielder must roll system shock. If the roll is successful the wielder will feel weak for 1d4 rounds but otherwise feels fine. If the roll fails the wielder transforms into a shadow (see AD&D Monster Manual). This transformation can be reversed by a **Dispel Magic** vs. 15th level magic, and if it is not done within a week the change becomes permanent.

Sword type (1d8): 1-4 short, 5-7 broad, 8 long.

GP value 18,000; XP value 3,000

Spark Sword

by Ian Slater

A **Spark Sword** is a +1 magical weapon. Once per day the wielder can "spark" all creatures within a 3" radius. All in the area of effect with metal on their person (armor or weapon) must save versus spells or their metal will spark, doing 1 hp of electrical damage per metal item (armor counts as 2 items, each weapon as 1 item) and causing the victim to drop any metal item they are holding. Anything metal in a pack will not do any damage to the user.

Sword type (1d6): 1 short, 2-3 broad, 4-6 long.

GP value 9,000; XP value 2,000

The Toybox III: Cure Stones

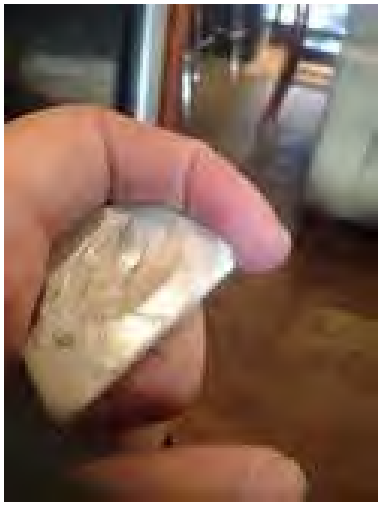
by Lenard Lakofka

Cure Stones look like "worry stones", being about 1 inch by 2 inches and 1/8 inch thick. One side is flat and the other side is curved, and the flat side has an indent as if for a holder's thumb. The index finger then wraps around the curve of the stone. Cure Stones can be held comfortably in the right or left hand. They are commonly made of polished marble but may be made from other types of stone.

Note: In folklore it is believed that rubbing a worry stone, when held between the index finger and thumb, lessens one's worries.

This magic item has two functions with a pair of minor side effects. When "empty" the stone radiates magic only by touch but Detect Magic from a wand, sword or 5th or higher spell caster will reveal magic at normal ranges. When full or partially "full" the stone radiates magic at a distance based upon the magic used for detection.

Filling the Stone



The stone may be held in either hand as noted above. For one full round the only manifestations of something happening is the stone will go up 20 degrees Fahrenheit and at the same time the straight edge will begin a very soft glow – visible only in very dim light – normal light obscures this dim light.

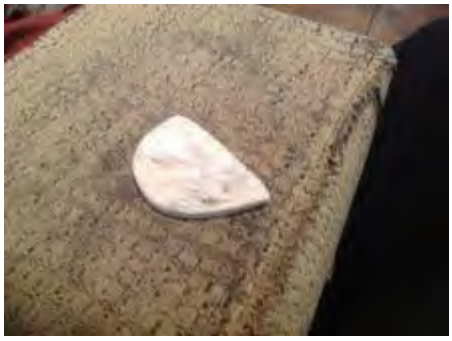
Beginning in the second round the holder will experience minor pain in the hand and/ or wrist of the hand holding the stone. If the holder ignores this discomfort at the end of the round one of his/her hit points will begin draining into the stone. The glow of the straight edge will brighten slightly. The holder can hold the stone this way for up to nine rounds, "filling " the stone with nine hit points. The glow after the 3rd hit point is equal to a candle flame. It will brighten to the glow of two candles after the 8th hit point drains into the stone.

Important Notes

7. The stone can only drain points from a willing human, demi-human, or humanoid of ogre size or smaller. Other living beings cannot "fill" the stone.
8. The stone cannot drain someone below one hit point. Thus someone with 5 current hit points can only drain four points into the stone.
9. Only one figure can put hit points into the stone during filling. The stone cannot be passed to someone else to add more points. However, the person loading the stone can load more of his/her points to get the stone up to the nine point limit.
10. The "loader" cannot be cured by Cure Light Wounds until as many hours as there are hit points in the stone have gone by. More powerful cures and Potions of Healing will work immediately. However, the "loader" will regain those hit points at the rate of one point per eight hours passed. This includes those walking, running, climbing hills, engaged in melee, operating a magic device/item or casting a spell.

An unconscious figure can never be drained of hit points even if he or she was willing before he or she became unconscious. This includes sleeping figures but not Held figures since they could be willing to have points drained by putting the stone in their hand in the correct position. An unconscious, sleeping or held figure can be cured by the stone if someone put the stone in his or her hand in the correct position.

Once the stone has at least one point inside, it can be drained. Draining is the opposite of loading. The loader must put the stone in the other hand from the one used to load it. Someone else can unload with either hand. Points take one full round to drain into a wounded figure. A fully cured figure will not drain hit points in any case. The stone can give its points to multiple eligible wounded figures.



During the draining the stone's glow will diminish and go out upon reaching zero. The stone will also become physically cooler. Note that the stone cannot be reloaded until it is at zero points and 24 hours have passed.

The stone's value is that any eligible figure can load and drain the stone regardless of class.

The stone will drain off hit points over time. To determine when the stone begins draining, add the number of hit points in the stone to nine. This many days after a stone is loaded it will begin draining at a rate of one hit point per day. For example, a stone with three hit points will begin draining after twelve days, and on day fifteen it will be empty.

The stones are said to have originated in either Hepmoland, or from the Scarlet Brotherhood territory. That rumor is somewhat likely. The stone (s) is more likely to be found on the person of a leader type (human, demi-human, or humanoid).

The stone is valued at a minimum of 500 gold pieces and higher offers have been made. It is worth 50 XP.

Sword of Retribution

by Ian Slater

This sword is a + 1 weapon with a white metal blade. Whenever a melee attack against the wielder fails the "to hit" roll by 5 or more the attack was parried by the sword and the attacker's weapon must save versus crushing blow or be destroyed.

Note that 1% of these weapons are cursed and when the "to hit" roll is failed by 5 or more the sword itself and all metal objects on the wielder must save versus crushing blow or be destroyed.

Sword type (1d8): 1-3 short, 4-6 broad, 7-8 long.

GP value 10,000; XP value 2,000

A Riddle

By Nicole Massey

I wait in stony silence,
A testament to the past,
Memory of art or violence,
An icon that will last.
A girl no arms will cuddle,
A man no lips will kiss,
A symbol amidst the rubble,
Set out where none can miss.
My heart is hard and frozen,
Just like my flesh and skin,
A mark of paths less chosen,
And those not tread again.
I stand here through the ages,
Like lions by the door,
And walk through history's pages,
Like horses to the fore.
So can you read my secret,
And can you say my name?
I pass through time and regret,
And ever stay the same.
And as I watch your passing,
And look down on your heads,
I see my echoes massing,
Neither alive nor dead.
What am I?

Spellcaster's Paradise I: Kara's Telepad

by Nicole Massey, based on a spell by Lee Conner

Kara's Telepad

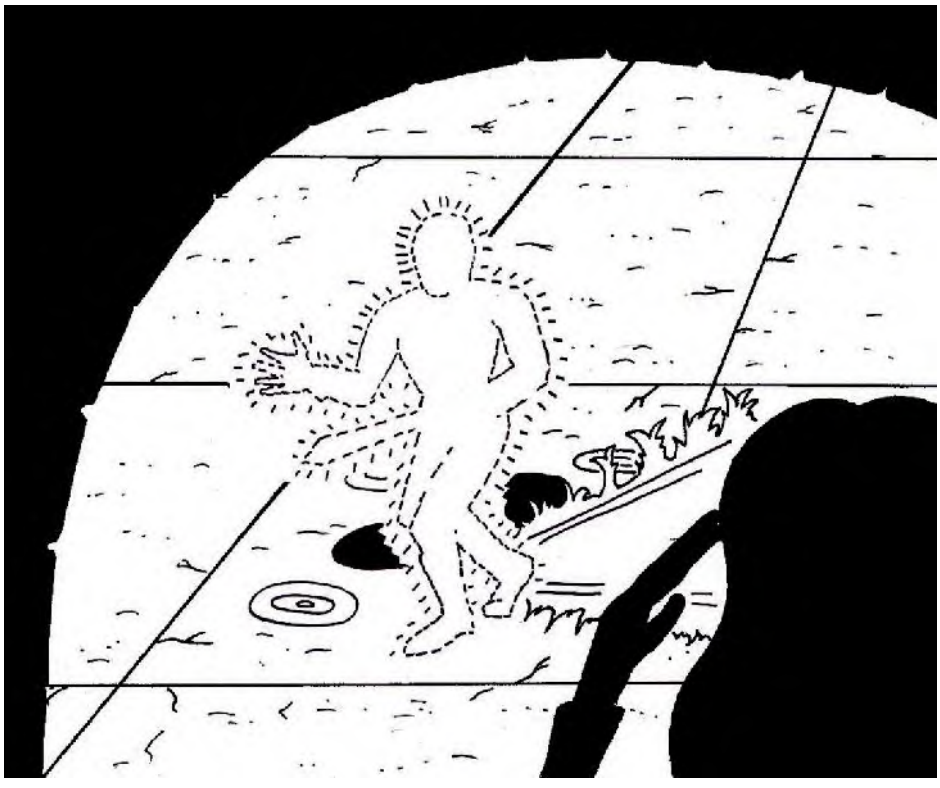
Level:	Magic-User 8
Type:	Alteration/Enchantment
Range:	touch
Duration:	permanent
Area of effect:	10'x10' square
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	1 week
Saving Throw:	None

Though telepads existed before Kara's time, she enhanced the spell so that it bears her name. (Some say she re-discovered it.) This spell creates an up to 10'x10' section of floor that acts as a permanent **Teleport** spell. The caster must concentrate on the telepad, fixing in his or her mind the command word, if any, that will activate the pad. If a pad has no command word, or if the command word is spoken, any creature or weight in excess of 500 GPW that steps or is placed on the telepad will be teleported to another telepad. The caster determines where the telepad will teleport creatures and objects to, the destination being another telepad of his or her own creation or an advanced telepad of any caster's creation that will accept additional incoming telepads.

Once the command word and destination are set, they cannot be changed except by the original caster. Note that a basic telepad can have only one destination, but can be the destination of many telepads. When a creature or object is transported, the receiving telepad will not operate until it is cleared of anything larger than a rat.

The advanced telepad is created by a group of magic-users working together. Each magic user must cast the spell, and the entire group must have a combined intelligence of 160 or higher and combined levels of 80 or higher. Also, each caster must have a focus, either a staff or athame, for later use.

The advanced telepad will automatically go to a specified destination, but each magic-user may contribute a command word that will route those stepping on it to another telepad. The Magic-Users must also decide if they want to limit connections to this telepad, and if so, how many connections to allow – this number must be held in the mind of each caster during the creation of the telepad or it will accept unlimited numbers of connections, and often the casters will inscribe this in their preparations or even permanently in sight on the pad so they can focus on this number. The advanced telepad will remain dormant for 1 round before teleporting those on it to provide time for the command words. If multiple command words are spoken in this round, the persons speaking each command word will be taken to their individual



destinations while those not speaking will go to the default destination, while if only one command word is spoken all creatures and materials on the telepad will go to that destination. Advanced telepads can only be changed by one of the casters who cast the telepad or a caster casting the Kara's Telepad spell while holding the staff or athame used by one of the initial casters in the original creation of the telepad, and the caster can only change the destination of any command words chosen by him or her or change the command word he or she chose. If the same casters or casters of appropriate level possessing all of the foci used in the initial creation cast the spell they may, as a group, alter any feature of the telepad, including what telepads are linked to it and the addition, change, or removal of special conditions placed by an Elvanic rune spell. (see below)

Use of an Elvanic Rune (see the spell for description) when creating the telepad will deactivate a telepad command word (or the entire telepad if no command word is chosen) until the conditions stated in the rune are met. **Dispel Magic** spell will shut off a telepad for 1 round, **Mordenkainen's Disjunction** shuts it off for 1 hour per level of the caster, and the caster or casters who created the Telepad can also switch the telepad into dormant mode as well until they reactivate it or a command word that is specified when the telepad is deactivated is spoken and any Elvanic Rune conditions are met, if included in the deactivation. The material components for a basic telepad are quicksilver, ground copper and silver mixed in copal and amber, also ground fine, and a gemstone of appropriate worth. The advanced telepad also requires an additional drop of blink dog or displacer beast blood, (never both) and appropriate gems for the additional destinations if required. The gems are ground and poured over the up to ten by ten area as the spell is cast or the additional destination is thought of and given a command word. For telepads transporting to another pad within a mile 100 GPV of gems are required, while transporting to one to ten miles requires 200 GPV of gems, ten to fifty miles requires 300 GPV of gems, fifty to five hundred miles requires 500 GPV of gems, five hundred to five thousand miles requires 1000 GPV of gems, anything past that on the same plane requires 2,500 GPV of gems, while each plane of distance requires an additional 5,000 GPV of gems. (For the determination of this spell, para-planes and pocket planes are considered neighboring to the current plane, as are the ethereal, elemental, positive and negative material planes.) Telepads always detect as magical when active and only faintly of magic when dormant or shut off.

Quiver of Thambarskelfir

This magical quiver looks like a crude quiver made from tree bark, rough and ugly. It detects as magical and holds 15 arrows. Twelve of the arrows can be anything the possessor wants, magical or mundane. When reaching into the quiver the possessor merely needs to think of the arrow desired and it will be the one withdrawn.

The other three arrows? They are, respectively, +1, +2, and +3 in value. The quiver produces three +1 arrows, two +2, and one +3 per day. The possessor can withdraw the desired arrow by simply thinking of it as they reach into the quiver. If the maximum number of an arrow has already been produced, another random arrow will be delivered. These arrows must be used within 1 turn of withdrawal from the quiver; after that time the magic fades and the arrows become non-magical.

Another version of the quiver might produce 6 silver arrows per day; like the magical arrows produced by other version, the arrows must be used within a turn of withdrawal or they become normal arrows.

GP value 6,000; XP value 1,000 *by Bryan Fazekas*

Spellcaster's Paradise II: Wilderness Spells

by Lee Conner, Andrew Hamilton, and Nicole Massey

This issue has a bumper crop of wilderness and nature based spells!

Druid Spells

Forester's Stew

Level:	Druid 1
Type:	Enchantment, Necromancy
Range:	touch
Duration:	see below
Area of effect:	1 pot of stew
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	1 turn
Saving Throw:	None

This spell allows a druid or ranger to cook a very hearty meal using bits of bark, leaves, herbs, etc. The stew itself is nutritious, and a single serving provides enough nourishment to keep a human fed for an entire day, and one serving per 2 caster levels may be made. More importantly, the stew is capable of healing 1 hp/2 caster levels. The druid has a choice, they can make a single serving and concentrate the healing in that single serving, or they can make multiple servings and spread the healing around. For example, an 8th level druid can make one serving (healing 4 hp), 2 servings (healing 2 hp), or four servings (each healing 1 hp).

The material components are some edible plants, a stew pot, and a camp or cook fire.

Cost: See Unearthed Arcana

Source: Andrew Hamilton

Infest

Level:	Druid 1
Type:	Conjuration/Summoning
Range:	1"
Duration:	1 round/level
Area of effect:	1 creature
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	1 Segment
Saving Throw:	Negates

When cast this spell causes one target creature to suffer infestation by biting or stinging insects of one type, like fleas, mites, bedbugs, mosquitoes, small spiders, etc. The spell does 1d3 points of damage per round of spell duration. Immersing the creature in water (or fire if the creature can withstand such treatment) will cause the insects to flee their target.

Cost: 100gp

Source: Lee Conner

Salve

Level:	Druid 1
Type:	Alteration, Necromancy
Range:	touch
Duration:	see below
Area of effect:	see below
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	1 turn
Saving Throw:	None

The **Salve** spell is cast by a druid while making a healing salve (using the healing non-weapon proficiency). The spell works to double the efficacy of the non-weapon proficiencies. Thus the spell allows the druid possessing the healing non-weapon proficiency to heal up to 2 hit points of injury per day for a character who remains active. If the druid tends to a character at complete rest, the salve allows the injured character to recover 4 hp per day. If the druid lacks the healing proficiency the salve is still effective, but at a reduced level, mimicking the base effects of the healing non-weapon proficiency (recover 1 hp if active or 2 hp at complete rest). Note that the salve does not have any affect if used to immediately tend to injuries.

The druid is able to mix enough of a batch to treat one patient for every three levels of experience, rounded up. Thus a 1st to 3rd level druid is able to

tend to one patient, a 4th level druid is able to tend to 2 patients, while a 7 to 9th level druid can tend to 3 patients. This allows a high level druid to exceed the restriction of benefiting a single patient as described in the healing non-weapon proficiency.

The casting time reflects the time necessary to combine the gathered medicinal herbs and plants to create a salve, but it does not reflect the time necessary to gather the medicinal herbs (although a wise druid should carry an assortment of medicinal herbs with them). The salve's duration is adequate for a single day of medicinal application. If the druid was to continue administering healing and use a salve on a second day, they would need to cast a second **Salve** spell and concoct a new batch of medicinal salve.

NOTE: the healing non-weapon proficiency is described in the *Dungeoneer's Survival Guide*, *Wilderness Survival Guide*, and *Oriental Adventures* rulebooks. Also, this spell is also available as a 1st level spell to witches and clerics who worship deities of healing or vegetation.

Cost: See Unearthed Arcana

Source: Andrew Hamilton

Soupstone

AKA Pot of Plenty

Level:	Druid 1
Type:	Alteration
Range:	touch
Duration:	see below
Area of effect:	1 cooking pot
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	1 turn
Saving Throw:	None

The Soupstone spell lets a nourishing stew be made from bits and pieces of plants and animals, but extends the amount over many persons. The spell is cast on a stone, which is then put into a pot of water, and bits of animal and plants are then added to the soup. The materials added do not need to be the type of material one normally associates with making soup. So, some horn or tuft of fur can be added instead of meat. Some bark or leaves instead of root vegetables, etc.

The magic of the Soupstone spell makes the material edible (even if spoiled, but not if poisoned), tasty and nourishing. The druid is able to prepare a batch that feeds one person per two levels (rounded down), and the soup will keep without spoiling (even in hot conditions) for 1 day per 3 levels (rounded down) of the caster.

The spell is cast while preparing the soup, hence the longer casting time.

Cost: See Unearthed Arcana

Source: Andrew Hamilton

Creature

Level:	Druid 2
Type:	Alteration
Range:	touch
Duration:	until dispelled
Area of effect:	2 cubic feet/level of caster
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	1 turn
Saving Throw:	None

When this spell is cast, the druid converts a pile of man-made trash into a creature. The creature has 1 hit die per level of the druid. The creature can follow simple commands and can fight. Its armor class and combat ability varies by level, as indicated in the following table.

Druid	AC	# Att	Dam/Att
1-3	7	1	1d4
4-6	6	1	1d6
7-9	5	2	1d6, 1d6
10-12	4	2	1d8, 1d8
13-14	3	3	1d8, 1d8, 1d8

The creature remains in existence until dispelled by the caster, who can do so at any time. If used for combat the creature expires after one combat, regardless of length, or if reduced to 0 hit points.

Cost: N/A

Source: Lee Conner

Druidic Armor

Level:	Druid 2
Type:	Enchantment
Range:	Special
Duration:	Special
Area of effect:	1 suit of string armor worn by the Druid
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	Special
Saving Throw:	none

Upon casting this spell the druid weaves a length of chord long enough to wrap around his or her body seven times into a knotted garment that acts as armor. The armor is non-encumbering, weighing only that of a standard tunic, and consists of many knots. The armor is armor class 7 normally in its least ornamented state.

While weaving this armor the druid can do no other action except for normal day to day activities like food preparation, tending his or her grove, and carrying on non-adventuring tasks, for a period of one week. The exception to this is that the druid may command and train animals and gather herbs as if normal. The druid may also cast spells into the knots and remove the knots at a later time to release the energy of the spell.

For each power level of spell the druid casts into the armor the protective abilities of the armor goes up one point, so armor with any number of first level spells in it will act as armor class 6, while casting a 7th level spell into the armor will take the armor to AC0. When the last spell of the highest level is released the armor drops down to the next appropriate armor class. The druid must save vs. magic for each spell included in the armor, and a failure means no more spells of that level can be woven into the garment. When the last spell is released the armor decomposes and becomes short strands of twine and lint. This armor may not be worn over or under any other armor, and may not be worn with bracers of defense, or cloaks or rings of protection, or any other item of protection greater than +2.

Cost: N/A

Source: Nicole Massey

Swarm

Level:	Druid 2
Type:	Conjuration
Range:	3"/level
Duration:	1 round/level
Area of effect:	1" radius
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	2 segments
Saving Throw:	1/2 damage

This potent spell conjures a swarm of hornets from the caster's finger. They will fly towards the target at a 9" move rate, causing 1d6 damage when they hit their target. They will follow their target without fail unless the target leaves the range of the spell. This spell is similar to Creeping Doom in the ways that it can be held or negated.

Cost: 150 gp

Source: Lee Conner

Thorny Bush

Level:	Druid 2
Type:	Conjuration/Summoning
Range:	3"
Duration:	permanent
Area of effect:	1"/level radius
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	2 segments
Saving Throw:	1/2 damage

When a druid casts this spell thorny bushes grow up and fill the area of the spell and surround any creatures in the area, including the druid if applicable. The bushes consist of thistles, mesquite bushes, holly, and other prickly or thorn bearing bushes and shrubs, and they grow to their normal height. Note that in the case of mesquite they don't exceed 2 feet in height, as they're bushes, not trees at this stage in their growth. The thorns and leaves do 1d6 hp of damage to all who do not save for half. Once grown, they must be cleared to return the area to its prior state. The additional material component of this spell is a thorn, bramble, or leaf from the desired plant.

Cost: 150 gp

Source: Nicole Massey

Shifting Foliage

Level:	Druid 3
Type:	Alteration
Range:	0"
Duration:	1 round/level
Area of effect:	caster
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	6 segments
Saving Throw:	None

The shifting foliage spell must be cast in a forest, scrub-land or other location with vegetation at least as tall as the druid. Once cast, the shifting foliage spell causes the vegetation in a 1" radius around the druid to bend, shift and shroud the caster. The vegetation will act as a shield for the druid providing 75% cover against missile fire (+6 AC bonus) or a +2 AC bonus against melee combatants. In addition, any other creature within a 1" radius of the druid (whether friend or foe) will suffer a -1 penalty to hit, damage, initiative and AC as the foliage, branches, etc. drag at and hinder their movements.

The spell effect moves with the druid, so (for example) they can flee through a forest and be protected from missile fire, or move through a melee and be protected from any combatants.

Cost: See Unearthed Arcana

Source: Andrew Hamilton

Electrical Forces

Level:	Druid 5
Type:	Alteration
Range:	0"
Duration:	1 turn/level
Area of effect:	72" diameter
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	1 turn
Saving Throw:	1/2 damage

This spell is an extension of the 3rd level spell, Call Lightning. Using Electrical Forces, the druid can specify the color, shape, and type of lightning. The bolt may be forked, allowing multiple targets, but total damage from the bolt cannot exceed that of Call Lightning. The druid may give uneven damage amounts to different forks, but damage must always be in whole D8 amounts. The caster may also reduce damage of the bolt, or have it do no damage. A Nature Strike, usable only in times of The Great Hunt or the Dance of the Forest, is a bolt of lightning that always hits its target and has no saving throw. In all other respects, this spell is as Call Lightning

Cost: N/A

Source: Nicole Massey

Ceremony: Samhain

Level:	Druid 6
Type:	Evocation
Range:	Special
Duration:	1 year
Area of effect:	Druid's charge
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	Dusk to dawn
Saving Throw:	none

Samhain is the festival that both represents the end of the harvest and also the end (and beginning) of the year. It also is the start of the insular time and the beginning of the cold season. At this time the veil between this world and the spirit world is thinnest, so divination attempted will work twice as often and with 25% more information. To this end all Divination spells successfully cast will exhibit full potency, resulting in the maximum result. Contacting spirits of ancestors and others who have gone beyond the veil is also much easier, and these spells will also garner maximum effect. Failure to observe this ceremony will result in a 50% chance of failure of divination spells and attempts to contact the other side for the following year. Finally, a -2 to all saving throws also plagues the one who missed this vital celebration, and all blessings and ceremonies attempted by the Druid will fail for the entire following year. This effect can only be countered by divine intervention or a wish.

Cost: 600 gp

Source: Nicole Massey

Hunter's Bane

Level:	Druid 6
Type:	Abjuration
Range:	Forest
Duration:	Special
Area of effect:	all creatures within the druid's Forest
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	2 Weeks
Saving Throw:	1/2 damage

Hunters Bane is a mass protection spell. If any creature attacks a woodland creature in the protected forest for any reason other than to supply basic needs (food, shelter, clothing, survival) the attacker takes twice the damage he inflicts on his target. The attacker may save for normal damage, and the target gets a saving throw also. If the target saves, it takes no damage, otherwise it takes 1/2 damage. The target can make no offensive moves, however, for if it does the combat becomes normal. The spell effect does not include the druid and his minions, and lasts as long as the druid is present in his wood plus one week/level of caster.

Cost: 600 gp

Source: Nicole Massey

Great Hunt

Level:	Druid 7
Type:	Enchantment/Charm/Evocation
Range:	Special
Duration:	Special
Area of effect:	Special
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	5 hours
Saving Throw:	Special

When a Druid casts this spell, he or she identifies a target, usually someone causing great harm to the druid's woods. This powerful spell conjures a pack of spectral dogs or wolves and The Hunter, a figure with antlers on his head and glowing eyes. The Hunter appears some distance from the target, usually one mile per level of druid, though Druid name level casters can start the hunt at a distance five miles per level of experience and Great Druid's can start it up to 10 miles per level from the target. Hierophant druids can start the hunt at any distance they choose. The hunt runs to the target in a loud barking mass, and all who hear must save vs. charm or be drawn up into the hunt.

Elves are twice as likely to join the hunt as non-elves, so they save at -4, as this is the only type of charm they are susceptible to, and any in the path of the hunt who hear and do not save will join the hunt on its errand.

Members of the hunt use no weapons save their hands and teeth or any natural weapons they have, and the hunt will initiate a lycanthropy incident in all creatures infected with same if their normal form is a humanoid one. Members of the hunt will not hunger, thirst, or tire until their mission is complete, and afterward those swept along will find it hard to remember what happened – roll a saving throw for each one at -3 vs. charm, success indicating that they remember the events of the night before. When the Hunter and his pack arrive at the target's location, all magical protections will fail unless they save vs. Spells, and the Hunt will attempt to tear down the structure if any the target is in and rip the target bodily into pieces no larger than a small stone.

Once the Hunt is concluded the members collected from the path of the hunt will wander around for 1d6 hours, or until sunup, whichever comes sooner, and then will wake up from their enchantment and, if they're lucky fail their saving throw for remembering. Characters and NPC's who have a strict moral code involved in their profession, like paladins and clerics, will experience trouble if they remember and the event is contrary to their code. The caster is counseled against engaging this hunt frivolously, as only a just hunt done to protect the woods or other natural environs will prevent a later hunt from targeting him or her.

For stats for the hunt and leader see the *AD&D Deities& Demi-Gods* tome under Celtic Mythos. The spell is in keeping with the lore surrounding the hunt and its effects as outlined in DDG.

Cost: 10,000 gp

Source: Nicole Massey

Short Road

Level:	Druid 7
Type:	Alteration/Enchantment
Range:	Special
Duration:	permanent
Area of effect:	Specified Road
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	1 Week
Saving Throw:	None

This spell is half the process to create a Short Road, which is the special time saving travel method. The creation of this spell requires a druid of at least 22nd level and a magic-user of at least 26th level. The road is prepared by special construction, with 10,000 GPV gemstones buried every mile of the road and holly bushes planted every half mile. Oak or Live Oak trees also must exist along the road at no more than 500 yard intervals.

The magic-user and the druid each conjure an earth elemental, one at each end of the road, and then cast this spell. The road will shorten and remove itself from the landscape of the world, and then the druid and magic-user each fix in their minds the end points of the road, usually by focusing on landmarks at each end. The magic-user then teleports to the other end of the newly formed Short road and the two casters travel toward each other to meet in the center. When they shake hands or embrace the road is finished. At this point the druid's work is done, though the magic user can choose to cast an **Elvanic Rune** spell at either end of the road to control when the road may be accessed.

Road length is 100 yards for every 100 miles distance the final trip covers, rounded up. Crossing mountain ranges, swamps, volcanoes, or other impassable areas like dense forests or jungles will add a mile to the length of the short road, and crossing oceans will add one mile for every 250 miles of distance, though the road will always remain dry and above ground. The short road will reflect the basic light and weather of the area being traversed, so passing through a jungle will be warm and humid and possibly rainy for the time representing that jungle, while passing over a pole during the winter will be cold with snow on the sides of the road. However, the road will always remain dry and passable, and will never show any wear. A Short Road can only be destroyed by a Wish or Mordenkainen's Disjunction, and spells like Anti-Magic Shell or Dispel Magic will have no effect. Once a Short Road is placed it cannot be moved save by the original casters. Note that most creators of Short roads will take pains to hide the road, as fast movement of this type destabilizes an area.

Author's Note: Joint casting is neglected by the rules, so this represents repair of an omission. Short Roads are by design supposed to be extremely rare, which is why very high Hierophant druids are required for it. Too many short roads can break a game, as it's then possible to move vast distances without facing any opposition except on the road, making ambuscade impossible. A map of known short roads is a very prized item.

Cost: 2,500 gp

Source: Nicole Massey

Magic User Spells

Infest

Level:	Magic-User 1
Type:	Conjuration/Summoning
Range:	1"
Duration:	1 round/level
Area of effect:	1 creature
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	1 Segment
Saving Throw:	Negates

When cast this spell causes one target creature to suffer infestation by biting or stinging insects of one type, like fleas, mites, bedbugs, mosquitoes, small spiders, etc. The spell does 1d3points of damage per round of spell duration. Immersing the creature in water (or fire if the creature can withstand such treatment) will cause the insects to flee their target. The material component of this spell is a small cloth bag of dead insects of the types summoned by the spell.

Cost: 100 gp

Source: Lee Conner

Sharpen Senses

Level:	Magic-User 1
Type:	Divination
Range:	touch
Duration:	1 turn/level
Area of effect:	caster
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	q segment
Saving Throw:	None

This spell may have been researched by a ranger, as the spell is of greatest use to an individual with the skills and mindset of a ranger. The spell is a divination that heightens sensual perceptions (smell, sound, taste, touch, sight). This translates to increased alertness, decreasing the recipient's chances of being surprised by 1 in 6 (a ranger would be surprised 1 in 12). It also provides a bonus to tracking attempts (+15%).

Magic-using thieves also benefit from this spell; it provides a +10% bonus to finding and removing traps, moving silently and +5% to climbing walls (the heightened senses assist in identifying the best foot and body placement, noticing subtle wear marks on a lock, etc.).

Cost: See Unearthed Arcana

Source: Andrew Hamilton

Detect Giant

Level:	Magic-User 2
Type:	Divination, Necromancy
Range:	0”
Duration:	2 rounds
Area of effect:	10" + 1”/level radius
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	2 segments
Saving Throw:	None

This spell identifies the presence of giant class creatures (as per the definition under the description of the Ranger class) that are within the spell's area of effect. The caster will get a sense of whether a giant class creature is within the spell's area of effect on the first round, and should the caster choose to concentrate on the 2nd round (assuming that the caster maintains concentration) they will be able to determine the general direction and number (one, a few, about a dozen, more than a score) of the creature (s). The spell does not identify the type of giant class creatures.

Cost: See Unearthed Arcana

Source: Andrew Hamilton

Forest Green

Level:	Magic-User 2
Type:	Illusion/Phantasm
Range:	touch
Duration:	1 turn/level
Area of effect:	1 person
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	2 segments
Saving Throw:	see below

The forest green spell is a favorite spell of rangers and elven ranger/magic-users. It is an illusion that works to blend the caster in with a forest (or other natural surroundings, this spell is useless in an urban or dungeon environment). The magical camouflage provides the benefits similar to a cloak of elvenkind. Unfortunately the spell has no effect on the noise that the caster may make, so the stealth afforded by the spell is limited to effective invisibility, as shown below.

Heavy growth	100%
Light growth	99%
Rocky terrain	98%
Open fields	95%

If moving slowly (less than ¼ speed), there is no change to the percentages. Moving at a moderate but cautious rate (¼ to ¾ movement) causes a 20% penalty, moving at full speed renders the spell ineffective. Once movement stops, the camouflage resumes (throughout the duration of the spell).

Rangers, hunters and archers find this spell to be preferable to invisibility, as the effects do not end when an attack is launched. Thus, an archer can skulk about remaining concealed, and harass an enemy.

The material component of the spell is a handful of leaves.

Cost: See Unearthed Arcana

Source: Andrew Hamilton

Transmute Stick to Arrow

Level:	Magic-User 2
Type:	Alteration
Range:	touch
Duration:	1 turn + 1 round/level
Area of effect:	3+ 1 stick/level
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	2 segments
Saving Throw:	None

This spell is of great utility to archers far from home and resupply. When cast upon a bundle of sticks (which must be at least 2' long and relatively straight) the sticks are temporarily turned into arrows. A total of 3 sticks plus one stick per caster level is turned into an arrow (i.e. 6 sticks for a 3rd level caster), and the spell duration continues for 1 turn plus 1 round/caster level.

The material component is an arrow head, which is not consumed in the casting.

Cost: See Unearthed Arcana

Source: Andrew Hamilton

Wood Rot

Level:	Magic-User 2
Type:	Alteration
Range:	1"/level
Duration:	permanent
Area of effect:	1"/level radius
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	2 segments
Saving Throw:	Negates

This spell causes all wood within the radius to rot. All items within range get a saving throw vs. Disintegration. Wooden magic items have a 90% chance +2% per plus to resist the spell. Wooden creatures such as Treants and wood golems sustain d4+1 points of damage for every two levels of caster. Plant materials such as rope, parchment, or cloth are unaffected. The material component is a drop of strong acid.

Cost: See Unearthed Arcana

Source: Lee Conner

Clime

Level:	Magic-User 3
Type:	Alteration
Range:	3"
Duration:	1 turn
Area of effect:	2" circle
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	2 segments
Saving Throw:	none

This spell temporarily alters the climate in the area of effect. The climate change is based on the material component used.

Component	Climate	Effect on Movement
water	rainy	Slick, Save vs. Dex to avoid falling
mud	swampy	Slick, 1/2 move, save as above
sand	sandstorm	Save vs. Breath Weapon or partially Blinded, -2 to hit and +2 to be hit
heated metal	hot, arid	Save vs. Wis or consume water stores
ice	snow	Save vs. dex at -2 to avoid falling, 1/4 move

Cost: See Unearthed Arcana

Source: Lee Conner

Adaption

Level:	Magic-User 4
Type:	Alteration
Range:	1"
Duration:	1 turn/level
Area of effect:	1 creature
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	4 segments
Saving Throw:	none

This spell allows the recipient to breathe normally in environments filled with hostile gases, in a

vacuum, or underwater for the duration of the spell. The material component is a normal wooden clothespin, carved by the magic user, and the clothespin is not destroyed in the casting.

Cost: See Unearthed Arcana

Source: Lee Conner

Great Hunt

Level:	Magic-User 9
Type:	Enchantment/Charm/Evocation
Range:	Special
Duration:	Special
Area of effect:	Special
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	5 hours
Saving Throw:	Special

This spell is identical to the 7th level Druid spell by the same name.

Cost: See Unearthed Arcana

Source: Nicole Massey

Short Road

Level:	Magic User 9
Type:	Alteration/Enchantment
Range:	Special
Duration:	permanent
Area of effect:	Specified Road
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	1 week
Saving Throw:	None

This spell is half the process of creating a Short Road, which is the special time saving travel method found by those who know. The creation of this spell requires a druid of at least 22nd level and a magic-user of at least 26th level. The road is prepared by special construction, with 10,000 GPV gemstones buried every mile of the road and holly bushes planted every half mile. Oak or Live Oak trees also must exist along the road at no more than 500 yard intervals.

The magic-user and the druid then both conjure an earth elemental, one at each end of the road, and then cast this spell. The road will shorten and remove itself from the landscape of the world, and then the druid and magic-user both fix in their minds the end points of the road, usually by focusing on the landmarks at each end. The Magic-User then teleports to the other end of the newly formed Short road and the two casters travel toward each other to meet in the center. When they shake hands or embrace the road is finished.

At this point the druid's work is done, though the magic user can choose to cast an **Elvanic Rune** spell at either end of the road to control when the road may be accessed. Road length is 100 yards for every 100 miles distance the final trip covers, rounded up. Crossing mountain ranges, swamps, volcanoes, or other impassable areas like dense forests or jungles will add a mile to the length of the short road, and crossing oceans will add one mile for every 250 miles of distance, though the road will always remain dry and above ground. The short road reflects the basic light and weather of the area being traversed, so passing through a jungle will be warm and humid and possibly rainy for the time representing that jungle, while passing over a pole during the winter will be cold with snow on the sides of the road. However, the road will always remain dry and passable, and will never show any wear. A Short Road can only be destroyed by a Wish or Mordenkainen's Disjunction, and spells like Anti-Magic Shell or Dispel Magic have no effect. Once a Short Road is placed it cannot be moved save by the original casters. Note that most creators of Short roads will take pains to hide the road, as fast movement of this type destabilizes an area.

Cost: See Unearthed Arcana

Source: Nicole Massey

Emporia & Domiciles: The Home of Walter, He who Dances

by Nicole Massey

Owner

Walter, 'He Who Dances', is a druid of some note and power who lives at the edge of the Great Eastern Forest as a perimeter guard. He stands 6'4", with bushy brown hair and eyebrows, and is built a lot like a bear. He dresses in colors that match the wood to facilitate hiding until he wants to be seen.

Walter, human druid Level 12. AC 5; MV 12; HP 95 '#Att 1; Dam1d8+6 (**Shillelagh V** spell); Align N; wears **Leather Armor +2** and carries a cudgel.

Str 15; Int 9; Wis 18; Dex 11; Con 14; Cha 18; Com 14

Exterior Description

Walter's home is a stout, single story building built of stone with a sod roof, and lots of windows with shutters. The main building is large and sprawling, with a length of one hundred and ninety feet and a width of forty feet. (Walter likes having a lot of guests. The building has three chimneys – one at each end and one in the middle directly across from the door. There's also a barn and half a dozen rotting dog houses, none of which are occupied. A large clearing of hard packed dirt is to the right of the door, and the area smells of bear scat.

Interior Description

Stout beams hold up the roof in this building, with slate panels between them. The middle part of the building is a vast sixty feet deep room, with a width of forty feet. A huge table runs down the center of the space, while the twenty feet closest to the fireplace is the kitchen area, where many bright pots and pans and kettles and cauldrons hang from racks mounted to the ceiling. The fireplace is big enough for Walter to stretch out on the floor and hold his arms over his head, and still not touch either end with hands or feet. Three large chandeliers light the room by candlelight. The rest of the room has smaller tables, chairs, benches, worn sofas, and a lot of tables scattered around to hold things. A large pile of blankets and pillows sits in a corner for anyone who wants to just curl up on the floor. (Walter has enough of these to provide for a full regiment if needed.)

Directly to the left of the kitchen is Walter's and his wife's room, which has a massive bed with a thick fabric filled mattress, a chest of drawers, and a wardrobe. This room is 20x20'. Directly across from his bedroom is a giant storeroom 40x40' in size holding unknown things within. Most of the rest of the space is made up of guest rooms, though there is also a large sitting room at both ends by the fireplaces. Sitting rooms are lit by candles, while other rooms have glow globes. The general feeling is a place of comfort and welcoming.

The barn is a storage space – no animals are housed here, and it's full of all kinds of domestic items, including spare mattresses, chairs, trunks, lamps and lanterns, etc.

Outstanding Items: Walter has a magical squeezebox (concertina) and flute that play by themselves. They both play only waltzes, which are Walter's favorite type of song/dance.

Cash Box: Walter keeps his possession in a false bottom in his wardrobe. Would be thieves will have to dig through a pile of boots and the mud said boots have deposited on the bottom to find it.

Occupants

Walter has family and a few folks living with him on a semi-permanent basis.

Staff: Walter's wife, Muriel Walterwife, keeps the kitchen and welcomes travelers if Walter is away. She's a hale and hearty woman in her middle years with raven black hair and a ruddy complexion. She's assisted in keeping the house by her sister, Laurel Jonswife, who could be her twin, along with Laurel's daughter Wendy Ferdswife, Wendy's husband Ferd Lotharsson, and her son Little Walter, who is still in his teens.

Muriel Walterwife * human zero-level; AC 8; Mv 12; hp 7; #Att 1; Dam 1d6; Align N; carries club.

Str 13; Int 16; Wis 14; Dex 15; Con 13; Cha 14; Com 17

Laurel Jonswife * human zero-level; AC 9; Mv 12; hp 7; #Att 1; Dam 1d3; Align NG; carries knife.

Str 11; Int 14; Wis 15; Dex 14; Con 15; Cha 16; Com 15

Wendy Ferdswife * human zero-level; AC 7; Mv 12; hp 8; #Att 1; Dam 1d2; Align NG; carries frying pan.

Str 9; Int 15; Wis 15; Dex 16; Con 15; Cha 15; Com 15

Ferd Lotharsson (human fighter level 3 AC 5; Mv 12"; hp 37; #Att 1; Dam 2d4+1; Align NG; wears leather armor and carries broadsword.

Str 18/32; Int 10; Wis 10; Dex 15; Con 17; Cha 13; Com 12

Little Walter Ferdson human zero-level; AC 6; Mv 12; hp 4; #Att 1; Dam 1-2; Align CG; carries club.

Str 6; Int 15; Wis 6; Dex 17; Con 5; Cha 16; Com 16

There is also a permanent guest who has become staff, a blonde Halfling named Rolly Diver, who wanders around fixing things and singing all the time.

Rolly Diver; Halfling thief level 5; AC 2; Mv 12; hp 13; #Att 1; Dam 1d4+2; Align TN; wears leather armor and carries **Dagger +2**.

Str 12; Int 14; Wis 13; Dex 19; Con 12; Cha 15; Com 15

Guests

There are a couple of permanent guests, one of which is Varner Macehand, a mountain dwarf adventurer who is retired and very old. He sets up court of sorts in the right hand sitting room most nights, and regales folks with tales of his adventures. At the opposite end of the house a dwarven woman, Felia Grimnash, spends her evening sewing or knitting while telling her own stories of life in the city. Both of them may have useful information from their respective travels, that could benefit adventurers. (Assuming the adventurer has enough sense to separate hyperbole and fabrication from the truth, as neither one will let the truth get in the way of a good story.)

Varner Macehand; Dwarf fighter level 9; AC 0; Mv 12; hp 91; #Att 2/3; Dam 1d8+4; Align CN; wears plate mail and carries **Battle Axe +2**.

Str 19; Int 11; Wis 12; Dex 16; Con 19; Cha 8; Com 9

Felia Grimnash *; Dwarf thief level 9; AC 3; Mv 12; hp 50; #Att 1; Dam 1d6+3; Align CN; wears leather armor and carries **Short Sword +2**.

Str 17; Int 13; Wis 13; Dex 17; Con 16; Cha 9; Com 12

There will also be 4d6 other guests visiting at the time in fair weather, and 6d6 visitors if the weather is foul. In addition there will be 2d4 people just dropping in on their way most days.

Special Options

If Walter is out dancing there will be 2d4 bears around the clearing waiting their turn. Bears can be

of the black, brown, or grizzly type. (He's too far south for polar bears.)

Additional Information: Walter is the legendary 'Walter who dances with bears'. He's also a high level Druid (the druid in his designation is also his rank) and the primary guard for this section of the forest, so he'll deal with any problems that crop up, often with several bears accompanying him. There are bear caves behind his property, and he will most often shapechange into a bear if he needs to assume animal form. He speaks with bears as a matter of course.

When dancing, his flute and concertina provide the music. He will invite others to join in the dancing, but he almost never gets any takers. (Any character with a speak with animals or animal friendship cast on them can dance with a bear, otherwise it's a dexterity check every round to determine if the character did something to annoy the bear, and characters with the Dance skill will also always keep from annoying their partner.)

Staying at Walter's place is a common stop for many travelers. Walter takes hospitality very seriously, and doesn't turn travelers away. However, problem visitors are dealt with using strong and direct force if it's required to solve the problem. Fighting, aggressive arguing, thieving from others, and "putting on airs" are not allowed. (Walter will point out that in his home he's the boss and anyone who thinks he's or she's better than Walter has forgotten exactly what house they're in and in exactly which forest – the Druids of the Oak don't kowtow to anyone.)

Walter holds a Shillelagh that has the full range of spells loaded (see *& Magazine Issue 4*) in it to make it a serious weapon in his hands. He takes his job as a guardian of the forest very seriously, even more than his habit of dancing with bears, and he performs the test on all who enter his neck of the forest. As a result there are a lot of animals running around that were formerly humans, demi-humans, or humanoids.

Plot Hooks

The party is caught in a storm and finds themselves at Walter's home. Other folks hostile to the party are there as well.

The party is told to go to Walter's home and meet someone who will hand off important information.

An aged minister of the local government has been invited to a conclave of the druids at Walter's home to discuss relations between the druids and some border nobility. The minister is old and infirm, and also extremely wealthy, and has both enemies and folks who would kidnap him to gain a hefty ransom. The party is hired to escort him there and back.

A local noble's son was hunting in Walter's woods and is now living his life as a civet. The noble hires the party to visit Walter and beseech him to return the noble's only heir to non-furred bipedal form in time for his wedding in a fortnight.

* All characters denoted with an asterisk next to the name are female. Unless the house members are prepared only Walter will be in armor.

One Page Dungeon: Giant Porcupine Rescue Mission

by Andrew Hamilton

This column features an adventure which covers the front and back of 1 sheet.

Texts Required:	PHB, DMG, MM
Monster:	Giant Porcupines, Gnolls
Terrain:	Forest
Party Levels:	2nd to 3rd, combined party levels of 12 to 18
Experience:	Total: 1,597 xp Monsters: 1,334 xp (assumes the party fights the gnolls, not the porcupines) Treasure: 263 xp

The Set Up

The adventurers have heard that gnoll war parties are active in the area. However, these gnolls seemingly have no interest in attacking human travelers or residences; instead they are prowling the forest looking for something.

A woodsman staggers into town suffering severe injuries, claiming that he and his friends were attacked by a giant spiky monster. He dies from his injuries before he can provide more details. The local villagers are afraid for their safety, and want someone to find this monster and deal with it. The adventurers are the obvious candidates.

A druid comes into the village asking for help. Apparently some of his friends were injured in a fight with monsters, and now the monsters have come back looking for revenge.

The Lair

Just over a week ago, a gnoll hunting party had a chance encounter with what they thought were some large porcupines. Deciding to have a bit of entertainment before dinner, they were tormenting the creatures. Unfortunately for the gnolls, these were porcupine kits, and the giant porcupine mother came to their defence immediately. Surprising the gnolls, the giant porcupine managed to kill one with a spray of quills and then put up a spirited defence of her young. The gnolls and their hyaenodon responded violently, and would have gained the upper hand had the giant porcupine's mate not also come, killing the hyaenodon and the leader of the gnoll hunting party. The rest of the gnolls fled in disarray.

In the intervening days, the giant porcupines have become exceedingly aggressive, protecting their injured young, and attacking anyone who approaches too closely (like the party of woodsmen). Even the local druid, Lestor Kint, has been unable to convince the giant porcupines to accept his assistance.

Lestor Kint, human druid level 3; AC 7 (leather armor & dexterity); MV 12"; # Att 1; Dmg 1d6 (oak staff); SA spells; SD move through underbrush without penalty or trail; AL N' Int Very; Size M; XP 205.

Str 12, Int 13, Wis 17, Dex 15, Con 15, Cha 16, hp 20

Spells (5/4/2 including wisdom bonuses): Animal Friendship, Entangle, Faerie Fire, Speak With Animals, Shillelagh; Barkskin, Cure Light Wounds, Heat Metal, Obscurement; Snare, Tree.

Giant Porcupine (x 2); AC 5; MV 6;, HD 5; # Att 1; Dmg 2d4; SA shoot 1d8 quills 30' range, 1d4 hp/quill; SD 1d4 quills strike attackers within 6'; AL N; Int Animal; Size L; XP 536, 416 respectively (350 + 6/hp). Hps 31, 11 (wounded, normally 26).

Giant Porcupine Kits (x 2); AC 5; MV 6"; HD 5d4; #Att 1; Dmg 1d4; SA shoot 1d8 quills 15' range; 1d2 hp/quill; SD 1d2 quills strike attackers within 6'; AL N; Int Animal; Size L; XP 135 each (120 + 3/hp). Hps 5 each (wounded; normally 12 hp each).

One of the gnolls who was killed was the brother of the gnoll clan's chieftain. Unwilling to lose face, the gnoll chieftain has rounded up a band of warriors, and is looking for some revenge. So far, the druid has managed to lead the gnolls on a merry chase to

protect the giant porcupines, but he knows that it's just a matter of time before the gnolls find and kill the porcupine family.

Kry'yyp Snasck; Gnoll Chieftain; AC 3; MV 9"; HD 4; # Att 1 or 2 (melee or war bow); Dmg d10+2 (two handed sword) or 1d8 (x2; war bow); SA none; SD none; AL CE; Int Low; Size L; XP 144. Carries 32 ep and 31 gp. Hps 22

Gnoll Bodyguards (x 8); AC 4; MV 9"; HD 3; # Att 1 or 2 (melee or war bow); Dmg by weapon +1; SA none; SD none; AL CE; Int Low; Size L; XP 95 each. Hps 20 each. All of the bodyguards carry bastard swords (2d4 damage); 3 of them have war bows (1d8 damage); 2 carry battle axes (1d8 damage); and 3 have pole arms (fauchards; 1d6 damage. Each carries 22 ep and 16 gp.

Hyaenodons (x 2);AC 7; MV 12"; HD 5; # Att 1; Dmg 3d4; SA none; SD none; AL N; Int Animal; Size L; XP 215 each. Hps 25 each.

Loose Ends

If the party is able to prevent the gnolls from killing the giant porcupines, the male becomes less aggressive over the course of the next two weeks, as his mate heals and the local druid works to calm the animal down. Of course, there is the possibility that another band of adventurers arrives to find and kill the “giant spiky monsters”, and the druid may require assistance from the party to prevent the death of the animals.

If the gnoll chieftain is killed, the local gnoll tribe will be affected by a leadership vacuum, and after a short and bloody series of challenges, a new chief will take charge of the tribe, and a number of failed challengers and their followers will leave. The end result is that the gnoll tribe is weakened (and an easy target for a band of brave adventurers), and several outcast gnoll bands are roaming the countryside trying to obtain resources and vent their frustration (especially on targets like peasants & merchants).

Sword of Stealth *

by Ian Slater

This sword is a magical +1 weapon in the hands of anyone other than a thief. For a thief, up to two times a day the sword can be activated and for the next 2 turns any creature in a 4” radius of the sword looking in the direction of the wielder (say to attack, or to detect) must save versus paralyzation or be forced to look away from the wielder or otherwise not see him. In addition the wielder's experience level / 3 is applied as a negative modifier to the victim's saving throw.

Sword type (1d6): 1-3 short, 4-5 broad, 6 long.

GP value 18,000; XP value 5,000

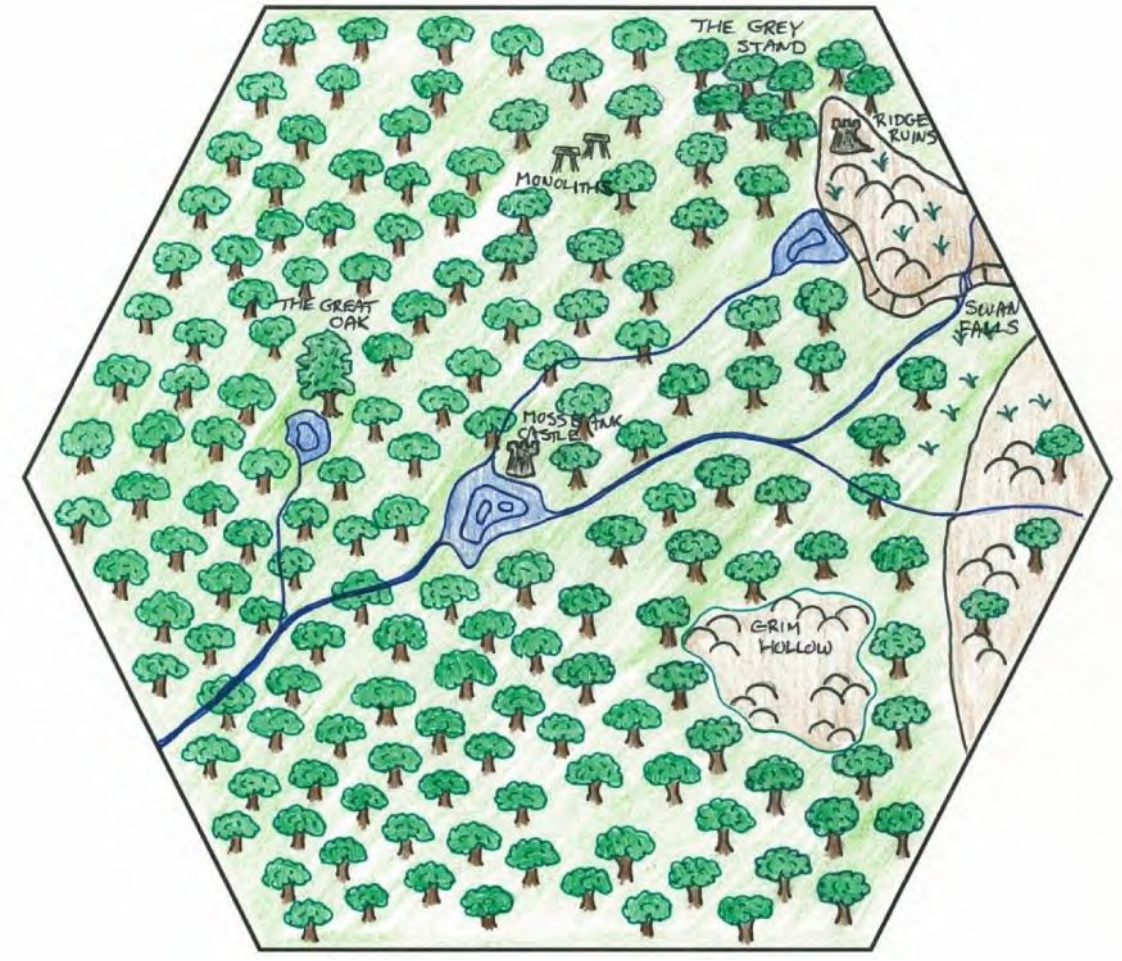
Hex Crawls

by Andrew Hamilton

What is a "hex crawl", you might ask. It is a section of terrain, a hexogonal area 24 miles (38.6 km) across. Taken from the author's campaign world, each hex crawl is fleshed out to give a dungeon master a starting point. Climate, topography, flora, fauna, inhabitants, and features of interest are noted.

What isn't included? NPCs, monsters, encounters. Each hex is a starting point with the background fleshed out, giving the DM a place to start and (hopefully) some inspiration to produce scenarios that fit their world view far better than someone else's generic encounter.

The Green Run



Climate

Temperate, with deep snows in the winter, rains in the late spring and early summer and a dry autumn.

The forests elevation is about 3,500' to 3,200' above sea level, lower in the west. The hills in the east are higher, about 4,000' above sea level.

Terrain/ Topography

The forest is generally a gently rolling topography, with an overall slope to the south-west. The region is well drained, although a few ponds have been formed where beavers have dammed small creeks. The hills to the east, including Grim Hollow are rolling karst. The ridge and hills in the north-east of the region are very rugged, broken land. The soil is shallow, and shards of shale stick up through the soil, making travel hard on foot & hoof.

Flora

The forests in the Green Run are predominantly deciduous hardwood, with oak dominating. A mix of aspen, maple and ash are interspersed, and birch, willow and alders can be found in poorly drained low-lands. In the hills, the vegetation transitions from deciduous to coniferous –primarily gnarly

pine, stunted spruce, and some low junipers, and in the higher elevations and hilltops, only tough scrub and shrubs are found in amongst the short grass.

Fauna

The region is thick with deer and elk, as well as smaller game animals like rabbits, grouse and pheasant. Songbirds (and their songs) are also common. Beaver can be found in most creeks, and their dams have formed many ponds where small trout and perch can be caught. Wolves are common, and bears amble through the region, but great cats are very rare (surprisingly so, given that they are not uncommonly in the Whitedust Hills to the west). Lycanthropes have been encountered in this region (werewolves and werebear), as have owlbears and other strange creatures (including forest miners, displacer beasts, and giant insects).

Land Use

The Green Run is wilderness; the only humans that travel here are adventurers, hunters and a few druids who associate with the Great Oak (below).

Inhabitants

This includes demi-humans, humanoids and intelligent social monsters. The Green Run is uninhabited by humanity and its kin; a few humanoids (mostly bugbears and the odd troll) are known to prowl these forests. Faerie-kind can be found here, some benign, some malicious, and all mischievous.

Features of Note

Mossbank Castle (Ruins) – this small castle, located on a high bank overlooking Moss Lake, is surprisingly intact given that it must be 3 to 4 centuries old, if not older. It was reportedly the home of a minor Lord of Illisal, a knight of that realm and his retainers. Adventurers have explored the upper ruins, and in the past have fought bandits, lizard men, undead, and vermin, as well as found some treasure. Recently, a band of trolls had taken residence here, until being driven out by rangers. There are rumors of many dungeon levels existing below this castle, or perhaps caves, but no surviving adventurers can attest to the existence of such levels.

Ridge Ruins – this watch tower and small keep are perched on the edge of a high cliff, and loom menacingly over the forest below. The fortifications were made of a dark grey rock, providing a grim and imposing look to the ruins. One adventuring band (The Northride Seven) explored the tower, and reported facing a number of magical traps and strange monsters, but recovered several scrolls, wands and jewelry. They returned to explore the dungeon levels, but never returned. The druids have traced several unnatural monsters back to these ruins, but have never explored it.

Swan Falls – these falls are quite dramatic, as water pours over the side of a 150' high cliff, thundering into a deep pool at the base. These falls were named for three warrior-sisters that lived here several generations ago. These sisters are now long gone, but there are persistent rumors that they cached a great treasure somewhere in the vicinity of the Falls.

Grim Hollow – something foul has tainted this place, and it attracts creatures of evil intent. Many war bands, including bands of gnolls, evil faerie-kin, ogres, and even stranger creatures, have gathered here over the centuries, issuing forth to raid and burn the Green Run and nearby human communities. The druids have noted that there is a balance between Grim Hollow and The Great Oak.

The Monoliths – these massive stone blocks are 40' high, and roughly square in cross section (6' x 6'). There are 14 of them, seemingly randomly scattered about a 2 acre area. The monoliths are devoid of any markings, although detect magic reveals a faint aura of conjuration magic emanating from them.

The Great Oak – this massive oak towers over the forest, rising 400' above the ground. The trunk is 50' in diameter at the base, and the canopy spread over 300' in diameter. The ground beneath the canopy is a grassy, shaded meadow. A powerful, spell casting dryad resides here; and she is commonly being visited or kept company by druids, good-natured faerie folk, and a few rangers. There are reliable reports that massive treants are in the area.

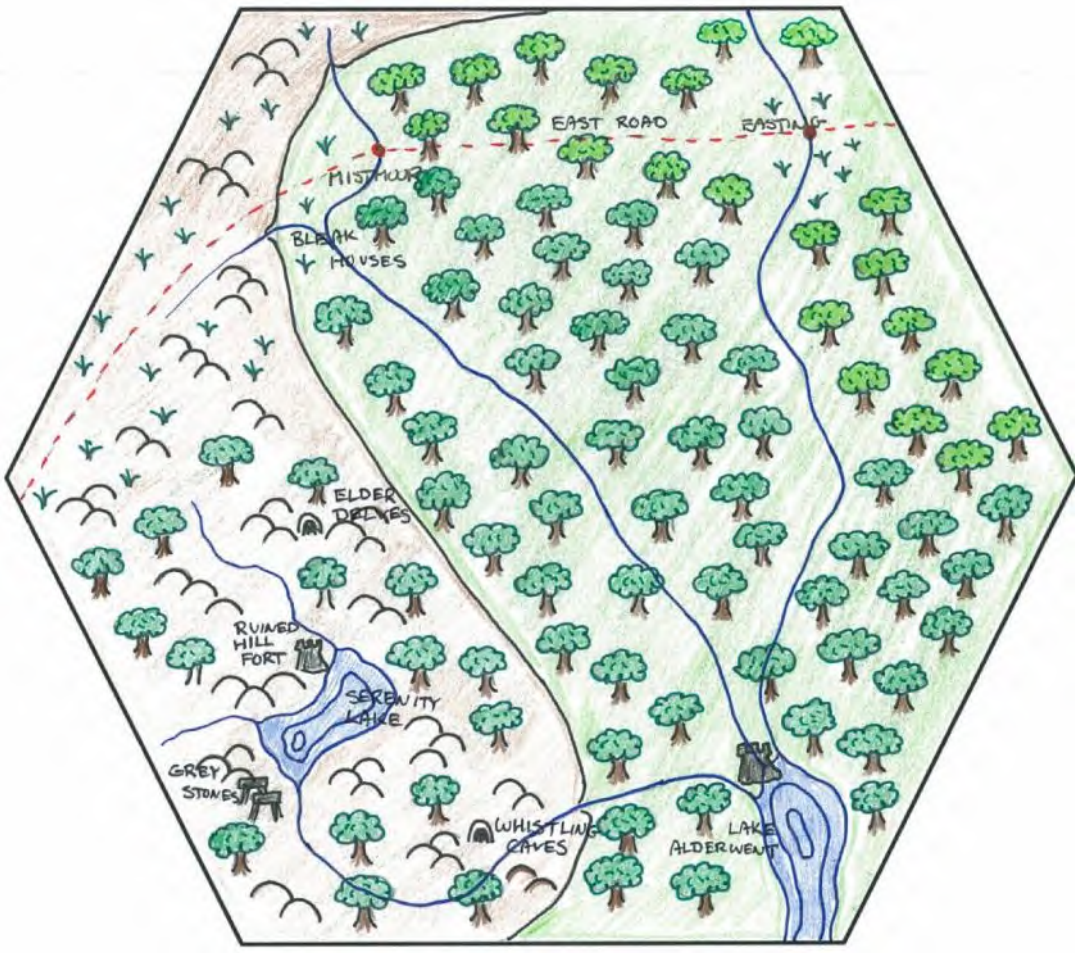
The Grey Stand (grove) – this stand of trees is thicker than the surrounding forest, and many of the densely packed trees are dead, their barkless grey trunks give the region its name. The Grey Stand is avoided by hunters, rangers and druids. Strange talking spiders the size of a bull lair here, making a meal of any who enter. Even faerie-kin shun this place.

The Hills – it is likely that there are a number of unexplored and unmapped caves in the karst and hills along the western border of this region.

The Mistmoor Region

Climate

Temperate, with deep snows in the winter, rains in the late spring and early summer and a dry autumn. The elevation is between 3,500' (in the western hills) and 2,700' (in the forests) above sea level.



Terrain/ Topography

The hills in the western area are rough and rugged, with steep west slopes and gentle east slopes. Serenity Lake, in the hills, is shallow, no more than 65' in the center. Lake Alderwent in the forests is deeper, easily over 200' in the deepest points. Legend tells of giant fish, capable of eating a swimmer, living in these waters.

None of the rivers or creeks are large. Whistle River (draining Serenity Lake) is the largest, 40 to 60' wide, often up to 20' deep. Both Fish Creek (flowing through Easting) and Mist River (flowing through Mistmoor) are 30' wide, although the Mist River is 10 to 12' deep, while Fish Creek is normally only 4 to 6 deep (with a few pools over 10' deep).

Flora

The forests are primarily deciduous hardwoods, a mix of aspen (normally in recently disturbed areas) with stands of oak, maple and ash dominating the forest. Birch, willow and alders can be found in poorly drained low-lands. The hills are forested as well, although the forest here is sparser (thin and rocky soils), and dominated by gnarly pines and stunted spruce, both of which struggle to rise above tough shrubs (like buffalo berry, silver berry and wild roses). The moors around Mistmoor are damp,

poorly drained, covered by tall grasses & hrubs, and small pockets of peat.

Fauna

The forest around Mistmoor is thick with game, including deer, wild boar, and moose. Smaller game like rabbits and grouse is also common. In the hills herds of elk can also be found, and the occasional herd of woodlands bison roam through the hills and forests. Trout, pike, bass, and whitefish are plentiful in the creeks and lakes; as are frogs, lizards, and turtles. Predators are also common, primarily wolf packs, some great cats (mostly mountain lions), and bears (both black & grizzly). More dangerous fauna includes stirges known to roost in the forests, huge trapdoor spiders and giant poisonous snakes in the hills.

Land Use

The Mistmoor region is primarily wilderness. Some land has been cleared around the communities and is now tilled (and is quite productive), and herdsmen graze their flocks in the hills and moors during the snow free months. There is some forestry, a bit of peat mining in the moors, and occasionally prospectors will claim to have found a vein of some metal or mineral in the hills (although a few generations back someone did bring a lot of agate out of the hills; and the location of that mine is a mystery to this day).

Inhabitants

Intelligent monsters are rare, although gnolls, bugbears and ogres have been known to wander into the region from the mountains in the north; and trolls have established dens in the moors at various times in the past.

Communities & Economy

Mistmoor is the largest community in the region (population 1,400), and the self-proclaimed "Duke" of that village sends military patrols along the East Road out to Easting (population 100), essentially claiming jurisdiction over Easting. Both are agricultural communities, farmers and shepherds. Mistmoor is large enough to support a number of artisans; and caravans travel the East Road to the Old Kingdoms during the snow free months.

Features of Note

Serenity Lake is known for the Ruined Hill Fort and the Grey Stones. The Ruined Hill Fort was once a keep or small castle; it is mostly rubble now although the broken bases of several towers still rise 30 to 50' above the ground. Bandits, gnolls, ogres and worse have camped in these ruins over the years; and there are rumors that a great treasure is buried in the cellars and dungeons below the ruins (of course, such rumors are told of every ruin).

The Grey Stones are a group of 7 structures (like inukshuks) arranged in an oval pattern. The carefully balanced stone slabs, a grey stone not native to this region, re each a man's height, and the structures rise 30'. Druids have claimed that these 7 stone piles were once powerful and evil formorian giants, defeated by a hierophant druid centuries ago.

The Bleak Houses lie to the south-west of Mistmoor. These manor houses and estates have been abandoned for 3 generations. Their occupants were slain or driven out by troll and gnoll raiders, and the fall of these wealthy families led to a temporary decline in Mistmoor's fortunes. Adventurers have poked around the ruins, looking for hidden treasure. Most find rats, spiders, and other vermin; a few have found silver, gold and even a little magic.

The Lake House is a ruined manor house and fortress on the shores of Lake Alderwent. This ruin has an evil reputation; many adventurers have gone missing while exploring the ruins. Others have returned with tales of ghostly lights, undead, rats the size of a wolf, spiders bigger than a man, and piles of rubble that attack explorers.

The Whistling Caves that overlook the Whistling River gave the name to the river. These caves get their name from the whistling that emanates from the caves when the wind is blowing; a natural phenomenon that has to do with the hole-pocked limestone that overlies the caves. A spring drains

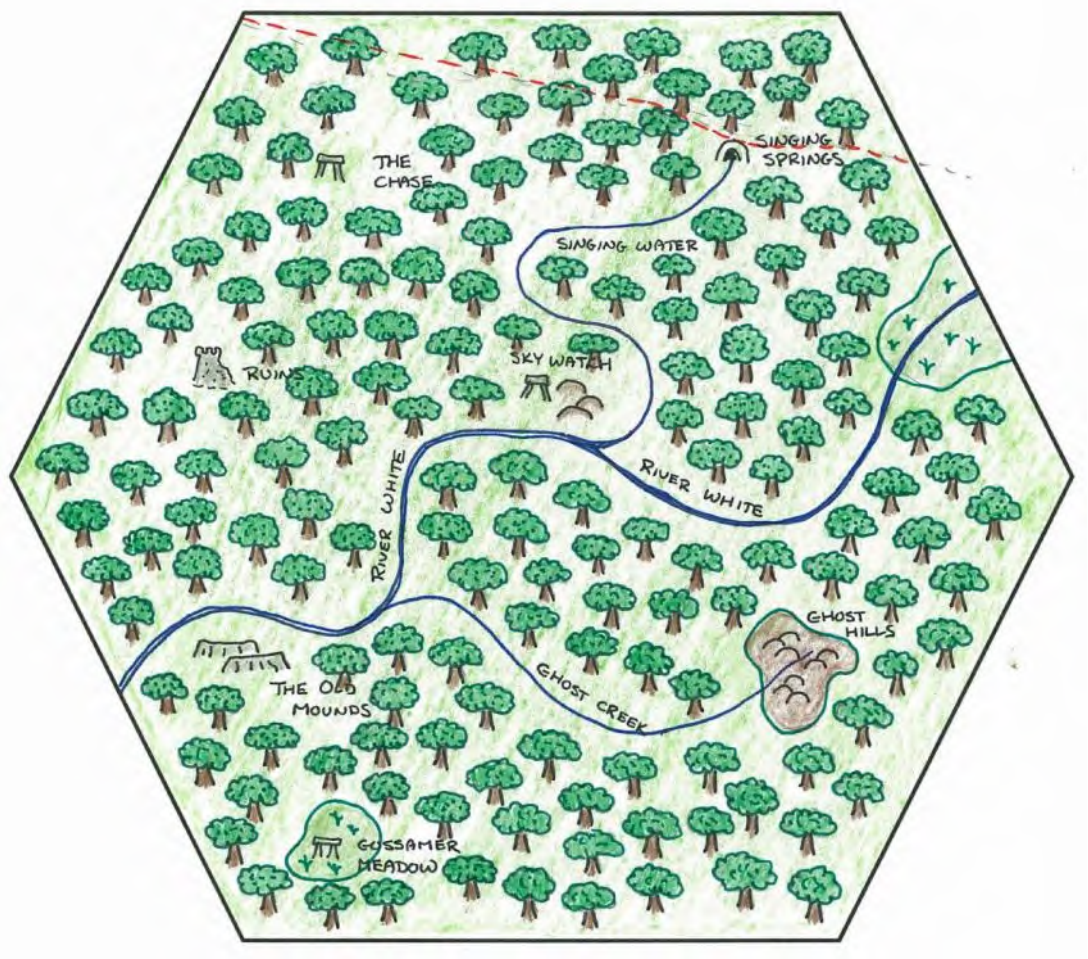
out of the Whistling Caves, joining the Whistling River. The caves are deep, have been used as a camp site by hunters and bandits, and explored by adventurers. Some have found nothing, some have found vermin, and some have disappeared.

The Elder Delves is a series of caves north of Serenity Lake. These caves are old, have served as the lair of gnoll raiders, owlbears, bandits, and even an evil cult. Worse, legend states that the Elder Delves was used for dark purposes by an elder, reptilian race. Common folk avoid the Elder Delves; adventurers flock to them (although few return).

The Ash Wood

Climate

Temperate, with deep snows in the winter, rains in the late spring and early summer and a dry autumn. The forests elevation is about 3,200' in the northern portion of the region, falling to 3,000' along the east-north-eastern border of the region, and slowly sloping to 2,900' at the south-western edge of the region.



Terrain/ Topography

The Ash Wood region is fairly level. Digging into the soil reveals a layer of ash (12" thick in places), the remains of a cataclysmic forest fire that burned most of the area over a century ago. While the forest has regenerated, the ash remains. Small creeks lace through the forest, feeding the River White, the main watercourse in the region. The River White flows slowly, at 1 to 1.5 knots, making it easy to travel up and down stream by canoe.

Flora

the forest is predominantly ash (green, black and cloud ash), growing about 100' in height, with trunks 2 to 3' in diameter. Stands of oak, maple, walnut and horn-nut are mixed with the ash, normally on the top of the small rises. The trees are well spaced, making an open, easily traveled forest floor where grasses, shrubs and forbs grow. The Ash Wood has a "park like" feel.

Fauna

Deer are plentiful here, and both boar and moose can be found in the wetter areas. Beaver are also common along the streams, frequently damming the streams and creating large ponds. The beaver in turn are often hunted by giant frogs, and the occasional giant crayfish also prowls the river and pond bottoms. Terrestrial predators are relatively uncommon, the occasional bear (both grizzly and black) will wander through the region, as do owl bears and wolf packs. Unfortunately, werewolves are more likely to be encountered than normal wolves, especially in the region of The Chase.

Land Use

The Ash Wood is wilderness, and the dangers of The Chase keep hunters away. The ash trees are sometimes harvested as lumber for furniture, but the distance to communities makes this rare. A road traverses the northern portion of the region, and travelers follow this road from Elway to Whitebridge.

Inhabitants

The inhabitants of The Chase, and their lust for the hunt, have slain or driven away most intelligent creatures. Even the wandering gnoll clans have learned that this region is best avoided (although ghuuna will occasionally prowl through the region hoping to meet and do battle with the residents of The Chase).

Communities & Economy

None, this is wilderness with no communities

Features of Note

The Chase – this outdoor shrine looks like a druidic Standing Stone, but it has been perverted by the followers of a dark god. It is now a place of worship, and a pack of werewolves dens here, worshipping the god of bloodlust and the hunt. This pack ranges far and wide, hunting any creature that they come across.

Unknown Ruins – these ruins seem more ancient than most, appearing to be nothing more than a field of cut stone blocks and cracked mortar spread out; with trees now growing throughout the area. The only reason that the area has been identified as ruins is because the stone is cut square, the trees are stunted making the ground easy to see, and a few small fragments of wall or staircase stand a few feet up from the ground. A few adventurers have poked about looking for a way to access underground tunnels, less have returned than have set out.

Sky Watch – located on top of a hill, these large stone monoliths and the circle of standing stones are close to a crumbling tower and hall. The markings on the stones prove that this was once an observatory; worshippers of the Moon Goddess consider the place holy ground, and many clerics will come here on a pilgrimage. The Pack comes here looking for prey, but have learned to avoid it on nights with a full moon, when something else prowls among the ruins.

Singing Springs – a peaceful spring and pond located alongside the road to Whitebridge, the Singing Spring is a sanctuary from the residents of The Chase. The Singing Spring is said to be sacred to the Moon Goddess, as well as to druids. Three women, sisters, live here. They welcome peaceful travelers, but tolerate no abuse or ill-intent. It is believed that they have great magical power (they may be sirines, swan may, selkies, or something else altogether). What is known is that travelers find the water refreshing, rejuvenating; and that the werewolf pack from The Chase may not approach within 100 yards of the water.

Gossamer Meadow – this large grassy meadow is often carpeted with wild flowers, earlier and later than one would expect. Travelers have reported seeing pixies and sprites here, as well as having been subjected to pranks of all types. As a result, most mortals avoid the area. The Pack has hunted here a few times, but they generally avoid the area.

The Old Mounds – scattered across a few acres, these large mounds are overgrown with large trees that blend in with the forest; leading most to believe that the Mounds are several hundred years old. The mounds are about 100' long, 20' to 30' wide and 5 to

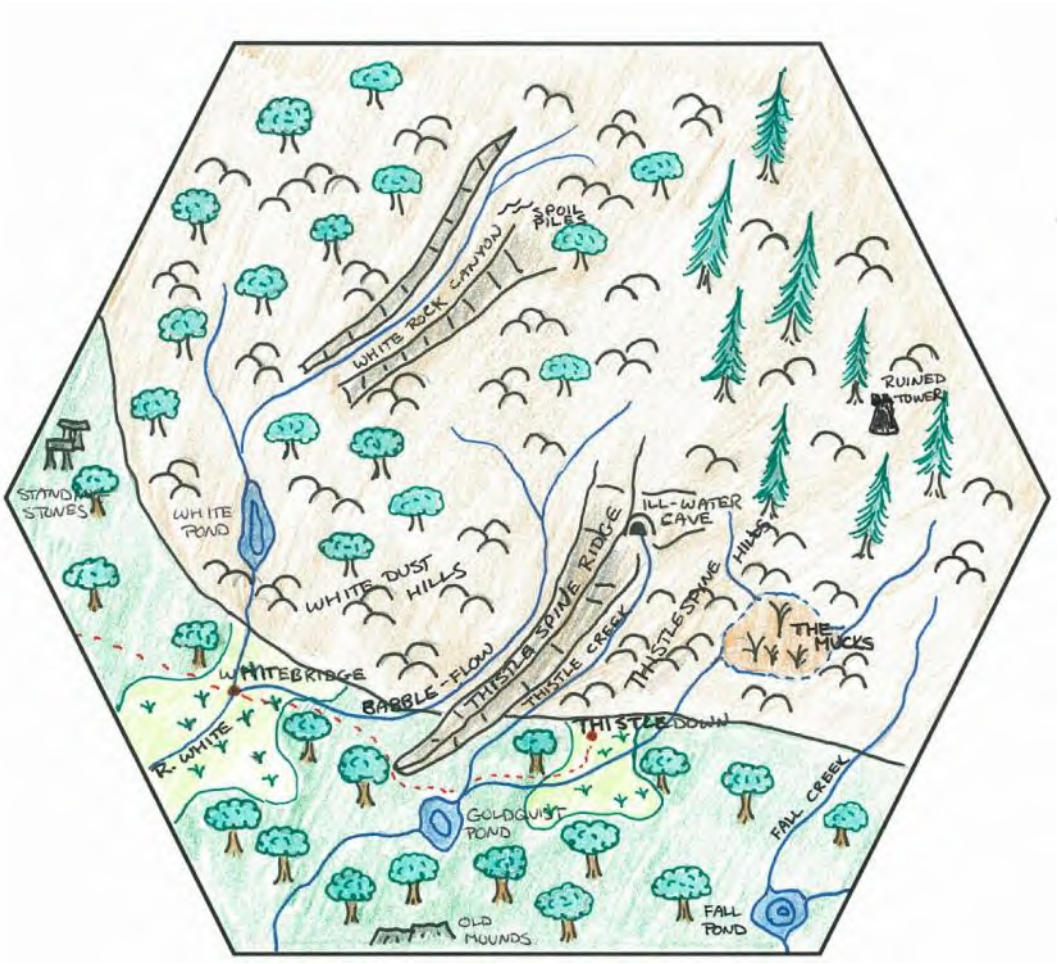
10' high. Their origin and purpose is unknown, and no reliable reports of their contents exist (although wild tales aplenty circulate, claiming liches, dragons, an army of pottery warriors, a herd of horses, or tons of gold are buried here). The area seems peaceful, rather than sinister, which seemingly refutes some of these claims.

Ghost Hills – these hills were misnamed, someone with a poor grasp of Elvish mistook "spirits" for "ghosts". In fact, the elves consider this area to be sacred, as thousands of years ago elven warriors were buried here. Younger elves would sometimes come to these hills seeking a vision from their ancestors. A few reckless adventurers have speculated that great treasures are likely buried with these ancient elven warriors; however no one has ever returned from plundering the tombs.

The River White Region

Climate

Temperate, with deep snows in the winter, rains in the late spring and early summer and a dry autumn. The elevation is between 3,000' (in the southern forests) and 4,500' (on the Thistle Spine Ridge) above sea level.



Terrain/ Topography

Hills in the north and north-east, and open valley bottom in the south and south-west. None of the rivers or creeks are very large, the River White and the Babble-Flow are the largest, about 30' wide and 4 to 6 deep, although the River White is larger downstream of Whitebridge, widening to 40' and deepening to 10 in the centre.

Flora

With the exceptions of some cultivated land near the human settlements, and the top of Thistle Spine Ridge, the entire hex is forested, with conifers (spruce and pine) in the north-east and deciduous trees 9aspen, birch, maple) in the south and west. while thorncotton (on dry south slopes) and pine, fir and aspen (on the north faces, aspen & birch in bottoms) in the hills. The forest is a mix of coniferous (spruce, pine and fir) and deciduous

(aspen, birch and maple). The deciduous is found in the wetter areas.

Fauna

Deer are common, moose are found roaming the waterways, and elk can be found in the hills. Wolf packs range across the area, as do mountain lions, grizzly and black bears, and owlbears have been sighted in the past.

Land Use

Borderlands, a mix of agricultural and wilderness.

Inhabitants

Humans have established 2 communities here, although a few halflings and half-elves dwell among the humans. The only other organized inhabitants are nomadic gnoll packs that prowl the hills. A generation ago the region was threatened by ogres and strange fish-men, both of which came from the hills. There has been no evidence of either creature for over 20 years.

Communities & Economy

Whitebridge (population 440) and Thistledown (population 200); both are primarily agricultural with small mixed farms growing grains, hardy apples, vegetables, and nuts and berries in the wind-breaks and along fence lines. Sheep are raised, and the flocks grazed in the hills late spring through fall.

Features of Note

Goldquist Pond - legend maintains that Quist, a half-elf mercenary, threw some gold into the pond while fleeing gnolls. Many have swum in the pond (it's only 20' deep or so), and it's a popular place to catch trout, bass and small crayfish.

The Hills (Thistlespine & Whitedust Hills) – the major predators here are wolves, and some claim that a pack of werewolves hunts the area. The limestone karst means that there are springs and caves across the area, almost none of which have been explored. Several gnoll packs with a score or members wander this region and have camps in several of the caves. The packs are all part of the same clan.

Ill Water Caves - kou-toa once came up from the springs that flow out of the Ill Water Cave. While the creatures were driven off, the caves were never explored.

The Mucks – this large swamp is avoided by locals; there are some mean critters here, including frogs big enough to eat a whole man. A decade ago, a band of adventurers came through Whitebridge on their way to the Mucks, seeking some great evil. They were never seen again; but as some of the locals point out "no great evil has come visiting either".

Old Mounds – located in the southern forest these are a series of six large mounds some over 100 x 50, and 20 to 25 high. Reputable reports of lesser undead being seen in the area. Some authorities believe that these are more than mere barrows, and a few adventuring bands have gone missing here (and other came back empty-handed).

Ruined Tower – located in the Thistlespine Hills, there are rumors this was a wizard's tower, but others claim it was a watch tower. Gnolls, bandits and vermin have all laired in the ruins, but no one claims to have ever found or explored any dungeon levels under the ruins.

Thistlespine Ridge – a large ridge of hard, plutonic rock that separates the Whitedust Hills and the Thistlespine Hills, there are some springs along the foot of the Ridge, otherwise the ridge is only sparsely forested with little water, the thin soil is not fertile. There are tales that a hunter from the Ridge carrying rocks with veins of pure copper.

Spoil piles – several large spoil piles (several hundred feet high) are found at the north end of White Rock Canyon, but there is no evidence of mine shafts or other excavations.

Standing Stones - in forest to the northern edge, known that druids visit, but conduct no rituals. Rumored to have been raised by ancient followers of the druids; the druids are silent on the issue.

For Further Reading

This month's column highlights druid and nature related articles that were published in The Dragon. While some of the articles later made their way into the AD&D Unearched Arcana, readers may find it interesting to read the original articles.

Article	Author(s)	Issue	Game System
Hints for D&D Judges Part 2: Wilderness	Joe Fischer	1	OD&D
Designing for Unique Wilderness Encounters	Daniel Clifton	10	OD&D
Druids, The	James Bruner	12	OD&D
Weather In the Wilderness	David Tillery	15	OD&D
Druid In Fact and Fantasy, The	William Fawcett	32	--
Druid and the DM, The	Tim Lasko	48	D&D1
Beyond the Dungeon	Katharine Kerr	88	D&D1
Clerics Live By Other Rules	Gary Gygax	92	D&D1
Life Beyond 15th Level	Gary Gygax	93	D&D1
Battles Above the Dungeon	Tim Brown	95	D&D1
New Jobs For Demi-Humans	Gary Gygax	96	D&D1
Role of Nature, The	Bruce Humphrey	108	D&D1
Cantrips For Druids -- Naturally	Rick Reid	119	D&D1
Is There a Doctor In the Forest?	John Warren	119	D&D1
On Becoming the Great Druid	Volkart & Jenkins	119	D&D1
Higher Aspirations	Mark L. Palmer	120	D&D1
New, Improved Druid, The	Richard Hernandez	139	D&D1
Bazaar of the Bizarre	Matt Posner	187	D&D2
Urban Druids: Secret Voice of the City	James Jacobs	317	D&D3
Nature Unleashed	Kieran Turley	326	D&D3
History of the Druids	Lisa McSherry	329	D&D3

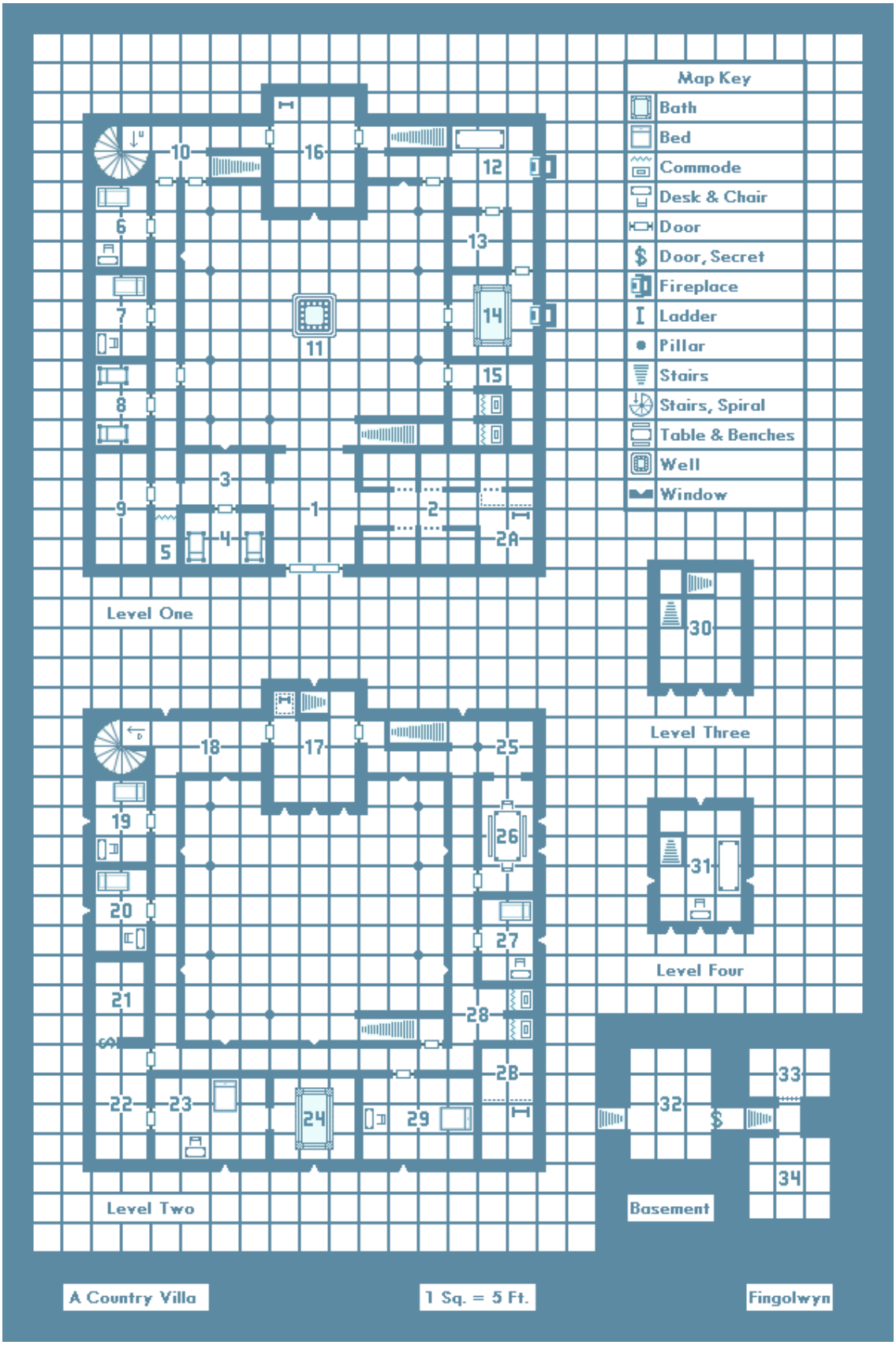
3rd Edition??? What the ???

AD&D-ers, take a deep breath and control your blood pressure.

The 3rd edition articles were selected for this column because of the content. The material was either edition neutral or it presented ideas an enterprising DM can either use (maybe with some translation) or it provided food for thought.

Map 2

Map by M.W. Poort AKA Fingolwyn



Each issue of **&** has a theme, and our goal is to ensure that at least 60% of the articles match that theme.

Why?

To give our readers as much of a good thing as we can!

Themes for upcoming issues include:

- Spells & Spellcasters
- Character Races
- Inns, Taverns, and Way Stations

What do YOU want to read?

Our readers should help decide what they read. Send your ideas for themes to: letters@and-mag.com

But … ideas are only half the picture! We need to fill in the other half, the articles! Do your part to keep **&** full of interesting things. Send your articles, monsters, spells, items, and anything else you can think of to: submissions@and-mag.com

Stay tuned for & Issue #7: Inner Planes

Coming in November 2013!

This issue may include:

Elementals With Powers Expansion

Adventuring on the Elemental Planes

Para-Elemental Grues

Para-Elemental Spells

A Deeper Look At Saving Throws

Coming in February 2014, Issue #8: Urban Adventuring

This issue may include:

The Business of Adventuring

Life Swarms with Innocent Monsters

The Brandywine House

Make a Mini-Castle on The Cheap

The **& Publishing Group** publishes fantasy role playing game articles, fiction, columns, adventures, and related materials primarily focused on the *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons* ™ game. We also publish for *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons 2nd edition* ™ and all variants of the original *Dungeons & Dragons* ™, plus similar open source game systems including *OSRIC* ™, *Labyrinth Lord* ™, etc.

Article submissions must be in RTF, Microsoft Word, or OpenOffice format. Artistic submissions must be in a common format including JPG, PNG, TIF, and GIF. Other formats may be acceptable, please inquire before submitting. No submissions in non-digital format will be accepted excepting some extreme mitigating circumstances.

Please spell check and proof articles before submitting, and please submit only articles that are completed. Drafts and outlines will be rejected. Please note that **&** will copy edit articles for content or length at staff discretion, although we make every effort to preserve the author's style. Authors will be required to sign a release giving **&** permission to publish their works.

Please no articles or art of pornographic, graphic, or distasteful nature. **&** reserves the right to reject any material deemed objectionable. See the http://www.and-mag.com/ for detailed submission guidelines.